



FACT SHEET INDONESIA

Women in Agriculture, Environment and Rural Production



KEY FACTS

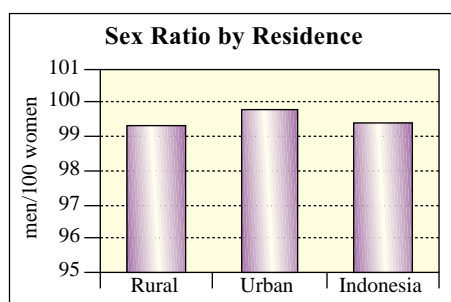
- ◆ The population of Indonesia is 50 percent female.
- ◆ The female literacy rate is 82 percent.
- ◆ Women's labour force participation rate is 39 percent.
- ◆ 61 percent of rural women are engaged in the agriculture sector.
- ◆ The population growth rate has declined to 1.26 percent due to a successful family planning policy.
- ◆ 60 percent of migrants are women who work as domestic servants.
- ◆ Women do 75 percent of the farm work in rice production.
- ◆ Women have active roles in livestock production, forestry and the environment, but their input needs are poorly addressed.
- ◆ Women contribute considerably to household income through farm and non-farm activities.
- ◆ The impact of the 1997 economic crisis affected women and children the most severely.
- ◆ Women's work is becoming harder due to environmental degradation.

GENERAL PROFILE

Population

Indonesia's population of 222 611 000 qualifies it as the fourth most populous country in the world. Indonesia is one of the few countries whose female population has consistently outnumbered the male population due to war and the higher mortality rate of males. Gradually the gap has narrowed to the 2003 sex ratio of 50/50 (ESCAP, 2004).

Indonesia is an island country with more than 13 600 islands. Eighty percent of the population lives on the islands of Java and Sumatra (FAO, 1999a). In 2000, 46 percent of the population lived in cities, compared to 22 percent in 1980 (UN ESA, 2002, 2004). Nearly 300 ethnic groups live in Indonesia; the majority are of Malay origin. Eighty-five percent of the population is Muslim; other religions are Christian, Hindu and Buddhist (Indonesian Embassy).



Source: ESCAP, 1998.

The rate of population growth has declined from 2.04 percent in 1980 to a projected 1.26 percent in 2005 (UN ESA, 2002). Much of this change is due to successful family planning efforts. The fertility rate in 2004 was 2.3 percent. The population is young; 29 percent is under 15 years of age, 66 percent is of working age (15-64 years) and 5 percent is 65 years or older. Life expectancy is 65 years for men and 69 years for women (ESCAP, 2004). In 1999, female-headed households were 18 percent of the total households (Oey-Gardiner).

Education

The educational system consists of six primary years, three secondary years and

three senior-secondary years of education. The government encourages human resource development through a nine-year compulsory education programme, provision of universal free primary education and absence of gender disparity at all levels of education. Consequently, the country has experienced a rapid increase in school enrolments. The net primary school enrolment of 58 percent in 1968 rose to 92 percent in 2001 (ICE; UNESCO, 2004). Data show virtually no gender disparities in enrolment rates up to the secondary level, but women's enrolment rates drop as the level of education increases (ESCAP, 1998).

Government education policies reduced inequalities between urban and rural areas. In 1997, 97.7 percent of urban girls and 94.6 percent of rural girls were enrolled in primary education. Secondary education shows gender disparities with female enrolment of 87.1 percent in urban areas and 70.5 percent in rural areas (BPS).

Female illiteracy dropped from 24.8 percent in 1990 to 17.9 percent in 2000 (UNESCO, 1999). It should be noted, however, that the illiteracy rate varies across the provinces, and females who are 45 years or older have higher illiteracy (ESCAP, 1998).

Labour

The adult economic activity rate for women was 52 percent, and for men was 85 percent in 1999 (UN Statistics Division). Women's labour force participation rate has increased due to the improved educational system, the decreasing family size and increasing economic necessity. Rural women's labour force participation in agriculture is 61 percent followed by trade (18 percent) and industry (13 percent) (Iftikhar). However, women tend to engage more in the informal sector and thus are likely to experience unstable, part-time or unpaid work (ILO, 2002a).

The economic crisis in mid-1997 affected urban more than rural areas. The urban unemployment rate that was 8.3 percent in pre-crisis 1996 rose to 9.3 percent in 1998.

Women in Agriculture, Environment and Rural Production – Indonesia

However, the 1996 rural unemployment rate was 3.0 percent and rose only slightly to 3.3 percent in 1998. The crisis affected workers with superior skills more severely than unskilled workers. Women accounted for 44-46 percent of the unemployed, however, more women than men were underemployed (Iftikhar).

Indonesia is a major source of contract migrant workers for Asian and Pacific countries as well as the Middle East/Africa. Large numbers of women participate in either undocumented or documented migration. A vast majority of these migrant women are employed as domestic workers (MPI).

Indonesia's **Human Development Index (HDI)** ranking in 2003 was 112 out of 175 countries, indicating a medium human development, defined by medium life expectancy at birth, high educational attainment and medium levels of income. Its **Gender-related Development Index (GDI)** rank was 91 out of 175 countries, indicating that Indonesia has targeted basic human capacities of both women and men without substantial gender disparities (UNDP).

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture accounts for 17.5 percent of the Indonesian GDP. It directly supports the rural population and is an important source of exports (ADB).

Fifty-four percent of the population lives in rural areas where agriculture is the main industry (UN ESA, 2004). Women play pivotal roles in the agriculture sector in addition to their routine domestic work (ILO, 2002a).

Agricultural food crops are the main products followed by plantation products, horticulture and livestock. Due to increased numbers of the landless population and large inequalities of land ownership, the rural population generally work as labourers in agricultural enterprises such as plantations, commercial forests, trade and industry (Iftikhar).

Although there is no legal gender discrimination in land ownership, the traditional social norms and customary laws constitute a barrier to women's equitable access to productive resources.

Crop production

Land in permanent crops is seven percent of the total national land area (GEO-3). Historically, agriculture has been the central focus of government

policy. Through various government interventions such as BIMAS (Green revolution) and INSUS (special intensification of food crops) agricultural production, especially rice, showed a marked increase (Mugniyseh).

Cropping systems differ among the islands depending on the agro-ecological zone. Indonesia's major agriculture products are rice paddy, cassava, maize, palm oil, copra, sugarcane, bananas, sweet potatoes, soya beans and peanuts (ADB).

Women's participation in agriculture production is high, particularly in rice production where women provide 75 percent of the farm labour. Twenty percent of household income and 40 percent of domestic food supplies are provided through kitchen gardens managed by women. Women have major responsibility in farm management decisions but opportunities for training are limited because, customarily, only male heads of households are invited to training sessions.

The following chart describes the gender division of labour in rice production:

Gender division of labour in rice production			
Production activities	F	M	B
Land preparation		X	
Preparing and caring for seedbed		X	
Transplanting	X		
Weeding	X		
Observation of the crops			X
Carrying meals, tea, etc. to the field for labour	X		
Managing water		X	
Fertiliser/pesticides applications			X
Harvesting			X
Threshing/drying/cleaning	X		
Marketing		X	

Source: *Van de Fliert, and Woodhead.*

Note: F: Female; M: Male; B: Both

Forestry

Sixty percent of Indonesia's land area is forested. Indonesia holds 10 percent of the world's tropical forests. For the most part, forests are state owned and administered. Forest-related industries are 3 percent of the GDP and employ 1.64 million people (CIDA). Indonesia is a prime producer of wood and wood products for Southeast Asia, having exploited 2.4 m ha of forest in the late 1990s. Forest exploitation is a major concern.

Access to forest resources has resulted in conflict between the traditional resource users and timber companies, commercial farmers and tree plantations. Commercial forestry has negatively impacted women in three areas. First, women who were traditionally collectors of food from the forest can no longer get food for consumption. Second, women spend more hours collecting firewood because it is scarce in tree plantations. Last, some species introduced in plantations require large amounts of water which cause women to spend more time collecting water for consumption as well as for agriculture (WRM).

Fisheries

Fisheries contribute 2.4 percent of the GDP. Approximately 1.8 million of the population are fishers and 100-200 thousand workers are employed in fish processing. Fishing is of great importance in the subsistence economy. Fish consumption varies with cultural preferences, but average consumption per person is 17.9 kg/year (FAO, 2001).

Women involved in fishing activities are usually wives or daughters of fishers. Rather than participating in fishing, they do the fish processing (42.3 percent), marketing (26.2 percent), small-scale aquaculture, net making and collecting shellfish. Seafood processing industries often are located at fish landing sites. Men generally work in mechanised fish processing factories, whereas traditional fishery products such as dried, salted or smoked fish are produced by women (WorldFish Centre).

Coastal fishers using traditional practices are ranked poorest in Indonesia. The decrease in fish populations in the coastal areas and the use of inadequate traditional equipment reduce the efficiency and thus the income of coastal fishers. Women often must supplement the family income and children are more likely to enter the workforce at an early age (WorldFish Centre).

Women generally lack high technical skills and knowledge about ecological and biological methods. Training to upgrade techniques is offered, but women often lack the opportunity to attend the training (WorldFish Centre).

Livestock

The Indonesian government promotes self-sufficient livestock production through the Bimas of Livestock programme, with emphasis on egg and meat production. Consequently, the numbers of



FAO/7757/F. Botts

livestock has increased sharply. Twenty-five percent of rural households produce livestock.

Mixed farming that combines crop and livestock production is commonly practised. Cattle, buffalo, pigs, sheep, goats and chickens are the most common livestock raised. Large livestock such as cattle and buffalo provide labour and are important sources of cash in times of need. Livestock also is used for rituals and ceremonial occasions and for recreation. Collecting fodder and water for the livestock is usually the responsibility of women, whereas men are responsible for livestock breeding and marketing (FAO, 1999b).

ENVIRONMENT

Indonesia's geographic diversity provides a rich natural resource base. In the interior, rich soils support rice and staple food crop cultivation at lower altitudes, and fruits, vegetables and tea at higher altitudes. Less fertile soils in the outer islands support commercial tree crops such as rubber, oil palm, coffee and cocoa. Forest resources in the less populated outer islands and fish resources are important to the poorer segments of the population.

Rapid industrial and economic growth has resulted in pollution that threatens health and livelihood and causes soil erosion, flooding, landslides, a decrease of ground-water, deforestation and the loss of marine resources. These degradations severely affect rural livelihoods. Women must spend more time collecting water and gathering fodder and firewood, and their income generating opportunities are therefore even more limited.

In support of sustainable utilization of limited resources, the government has instituted policies to improve the current land laws as they relate to gender, to create balanced market mechanisms and to establish fair regulation in the management of natural resources (Indonesia).

RURAL PRODUCTION

Although Indonesia is self-sufficient in basic food production, it is still considered a Low-Income Food-Deficit Country (LIFDC). Twenty percent of the population lives below the poverty line and 40 percent of the households are food insecure.

Owing to the high population density, large inequalities of land ownership and increased landlessness, rural people no longer can rely on agriculture alone. Increased numbers of rural women engage in wage labour, non-farm or off-farm income generating activities (Mugniesyah). The most common income generating activities that women undertake are livestock, small enterprises, agriculture processing, home gardens and small agricultural plots. The government promotes income generation through micro-credit schemes such as *Kelompok Usaha Bersama* (KUB) funded by the government owned commercial bank, the National Family Planning Coordinating Board (BKKBN) and the Village Cooperative Units (KUD). These measures address the needs of vulnerable rural women (ILO, 2002b).

FOOD SECURITY

Prior to the economic crisis of 1997, Indonesia was not considered an LIFDC. The impact of the economic crisis, however, followed by severe drought and forest fires placed food security back on the development agenda.

The primary problem was not food availability but that many households could not afford to buy food due to inflation. Food prices increased 118 percent in 1998 with an average inflation rate of 78 percent (HPCR). The decline in household income shifted the household consumption pattern toward increased expenditure on food.

Some of the coping strategies pursued were reducing expenditures on clothing, recreation and transportation and reducing both the quality and quantity of food bought, (Mugniesyah). Data from a recent Central Bureau of Statistics labour force survey show that women's housekeeping

work decreased 2.7 percent since pre-1997 and their participation in the labour force grew from 1.8 percent to 4.2 percent in post-1997, thus indicating that women have taken additional jobs to increase the family income for food security. The crisis affected severely women and children, the most vulnerable groups, with drops in education, health and nutrition (Mugniesyah).

POLICY AND PLANNING FOCUS

To recognize gender differences within households in the context of agriculture and rural production, policy-makers and planners in Indonesia need to

- ◆ collect gender disaggregated local data and conduct a gender sensitive agriculture census that incorporates estimates of women's un-paid labour;
- ◆ develop a rural technology and training agenda to assist rural women, especially in the outer islands, to improve their productivity and household income;
- ◆ integrate gender into all aspects of programmes and projects of the line-ministries;
- ◆ support government initiatives to decentralise and strengthen the capacity of provincial and district agencies to formulate gender sensitive policies and plans based on gender disaggregated need assessment;
- ◆ explore land reform policy to ensure more equitable access to land and provision of secure ownership; and
- ◆ formulate gender sensitive policies and plans based on gender roles related to household livelihood strategies, rural poverty and household food security concerns.



FAO/17246/S. Jayaraj

Women in Agriculture, Environment and Rural Production – Indonesia

PROGRAMME FOCUS

Agricultural and rural development programmes in Indonesia need to address rural women's and men's priorities in the following areas:

- ◆ train extension staff in gender sensitive and participatory planning and programme implementation;
- ◆ transfer gender responsive technology to rural women to increase agricultural and non-agricultural productivity;
- ◆ identify and respond to rural women's needs for agricultural inputs and household technology in collaboration with researchers, implementing agencies and grassroots workers;
- ◆ develop programmes to increase women's access to credit and other production inputs; and
- ◆ support women in their marketing activities, by providing local marketing information, improving transportation and storage facilities and improving processing and packaging techniques.

References:

- ◆ **Ahmed, Iftikhar.** 1999. Additional insights on Indonesia's unemployment crisis (available at www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/jakarta/publ/lipi.htm).
- ◆ **ADB.** 2004. Asian Development Bank. Indonesia (available at www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2003/pdf/INO.pdf).
- ◆ **BPS.** 1997. Indicators of Indonesian women.
- ◆ **CIDA.** 2002. Forestry profiles, Indonesia: Kaltim social forestry project.
- ◆ **ESCAP.** 1998. Women in Indonesia: Country profile, No. 14.
- ◆ **ESCAP.** 2000, 2002. Population and development indicators for Asia and the Pacific.
- ◆ **ESCAP.** 2001. Asia and the Pacific in figures.
- ◆ **ESCAP.** 2004. Population data sheet (available at www.unescap.org/esid/psis/population/).
- ◆ **FAO.** 1999a. Land and Water Development Division. Indonesia (available at www.fao.org/ag/agl/aglw/aquastat/countries/indonesia/index.htm).
- ◆ **FAO.** 1999b. Livestock industries of Indonesia prior to the Asian financial crisis.
- ◆ **FAO.** 2001. Fishery statistics in *FAO yearbook*.
- ◆ **GEO-3.** 2004. Data compendium (available at www.grid.inpe.br/geo3).
- ◆ **HPCR. Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research.** 2002. Building human security in Indonesia.
- ◆ **ICE.** 1996. International Conference on Education. Education development in Indonesia (available at www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Databanks/Dossiers/rindones.htm).
- ◆ **Indonesia.** 2001. National Communication and Information Agency, *An official handbook*.
- ◆ **Indonesian Embassy in London.** 2004. Profiles of Indonesia (available at www.indonesianembassy.org.uk/indonesia_profiles.html).
- ◆ **ILO.** 2002a. LABORSTA. (available at laborsta.ilo.org/)
- ◆ **ILO.** 2002b. Equal employment opportunities for women and men.
- ◆ **MPI. Migration Policy Institute.** 2002. Country profile: Indonesia's labour looks abroad (available at www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=53).
- ◆ **Mugniyseh, Siti Sugiah M.** 2001. Role and employment of rural women in food security: Indonesia case, in Japan FAO Association, *The roles and empowerment of rural women in food security*.
- ◆ **Oey-Gardiner, M.** 2001. Poverty and gender of household heads (available at www.adb.org/Poverty/Forum/powerpoint/Mini_Theater/M_Gardiner.ppt).
- ◆ **UN ESA.** 2002. World population prospects: The 2002 Revision, population database (available at esa.un.org/unpp/).
- ◆ **UN ESA.** 2004. World urbanization prospects: The 2003 Revision, data tables and highlights (available at www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wup2003/2003WUPHighlights.pdf).
- ◆ **UNESCO.** 1999. Statistical year book (available at www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=5066_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC).
- ◆ **UNESCO.** 2004. Institute for Statistics. Gross and net enrolment ratios, primary (available at stats.uis.unesco.org/).
- ◆ **UN Statistics Division.** 2002. Country profiles.
- ◆ **UNDP.** 2003. Human development report. (available at hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2003/).
- ◆ **Van de Fliert, Elske.** 1999. Women in IPM training and implementation in Indonesia (available at www.eseap.cipotato.org/).
- ◆ **Woodhead.** 2003. Personal communication.
- ◆ **World Bank.** 2002. Indonesia (available at devdata.worldbank.org/).
- ◆ **World Bank.** 2003. Indonesia at a glance (available at www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata/aag/idn_aag.pdf).
- ◆ **WorldFish Centre.** 2001. Global symposium on women in fisheries (available at www.worldfishcenter.org/Pubs/Wif/pub_wifglobal.htm).
- ◆ **WRM. World Rainforest Movement.** 2003. Indonesia: Gender impacts of commercial tree plantation (available at www.wrm.org.uy/bulletin/59/Indonesia.html).



For more information

Contact:

Revathi Balakrishnan Telephone: (662) 697-4844
Senior Officer, Gender Facsimile: (662) 697-4445
and Development E-mail: revathi.balakrishnan@fao.org

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
39 Phra Atit Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand

FAO website: <http://www.fao.org>
<http://www.fao.or.th>