
Gender Assessment

FP170: Enhancing climate resilience in Thailand through effective water management and sustainable agriculture

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Gender Assessment, Action Plan and Budget

Enhancing climate resilience in Thailand through effective water management and sustainable agriculture

I. Introduction

This gender assessment aims to provide an overview of the gender situation in Thailand, with a specific focus on supporting climate resilience and transformational change in water management and sustainable agriculture, identifying gender issues that are relevant to the project, and examining potential gender mainstreaming opportunities at the policy and project level. The assessment is based on available data from studies conducted by the Royal Thai Government (RTG), UN agencies, and multilateral development agencies; and includes:

- Undertaking a desk review on gender-related studies conducted for Thailand
- Drawing on earlier stakeholder consultations [and engaging potential female beneficiaries of the project and incorporating feedback into the design of the proposed project]
- Incorporating information and lessons learned from past studies and assessments on gender in Thailand;
- Documentation on Thailand's relevant gender and climate commitments under the SDGs, CEDAW, and the Paris Agreement (including Nationally Determined Contributions)
- Integrating gender considerations in the project indicators, targets and activities.

II. Gender and Climate Change Related Risks in Thailand

Thailand is considered one of the sixteen countries in the "extreme risk" category that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change over the next thirty years (Thailand NDC). Thailand's agriculture sector is particularly at risk with 55% of the nation's total area under agricultural use. Changes in climatic conditions have the potential to destabilize agricultural productivity and impact farmers' incomes and lives.^{1 2}

While the impacts of climate change affect the agricultural sectors and the country, climate change and its impacts are not gender neutral. Inequitable access to and control over natural resources, particularly land, water, and forests, as well as exclusion from the policy- and decision-making processes that affect resource distribution and their livelihood. These disproportionately affect the poor, particularly poor rural women, members of indigenous and ethnic minorities, who rely on natural resources for the livelihood.

¹ Talberth, J., Reytar, K., 2014. Climate Change in the Lower Mekong Basin - An Analysis of Economic Values at Risk, USAID Mekong Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change (USAID Mekong ARCC). World Resources Institute, Washington, D.C.

² Plan International. 2018. Climate change, young women and girls: Vulnerability, impacts, and adaptation in Northern Thailand.

Women as well as men are also both important change agents and critical actors in actions to address climate change and in adopting adaptation options to strengthen resilience of communities and households. Their potentially different knowledge and skills as well as needs and priorities are important to consider in the the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of climate change and natural resources projects.

III. Existing Gender Inequality in Thailand

The **Gender Inequality Index (GII)** measures gender inequalities across three important dimensions of human development—*reproductive health*, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; *empowerment*, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and *economic status*, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older. The GII exposes differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men and measures the human development costs of gender inequality. The higher the GII value the greater the disparities between females and males and the greater loss to human development.

The 2017 GII sheds light on the position of women in 160 countries; it yields insights in gender gaps in major areas of human development. The component indicators highlight areas in need of critical policy intervention and stimulate proactive thinking and public policy to overcome systematic gender-based disadvantages.

Thailand has a GII value of 0.393, ranking it 93 out of 160 countries in the 2017 index (see Table 1). In Thailand, 4.8 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 42.4 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 47.5 percent of their male counterparts. For every 100,000 live births, 20 women die from pregnancy related causes; and the adolescent birth rate is 51.9 births per 1,000 women of ages 15-19. Female participation in the labour market is 60.5 percent compared to 77.3 for men.³ In comparison, the Philippines and Viet Nam are ranked at 97 and 67 respectively on this index. Unemployment rate for youth (2019) is men 3.4%, women 5.3%, while the share of youth not in employment, education or training (2019) is men 11.2%, women 18.6%.⁴

³ UNDP. 2018 Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update. Briefing note for countries on the 2018 Statistical Update

⁴ ILOSTAT, 2019

Table 1: Thailand's GII relative to selected countries and groups (2017) Source: UNDP. 2018 Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update. Briefing note for countries on the 2018 Statistical Update

	GII value	GII Rank	Maternal mortality ratio	Adolescent birth rate	Female seats in parliament (%)	Population with at least some secondary education (%)		Labour force participation rate (%)	
						F	M	F	M
Thailand	0.393	93	20	51.9	4.8	42.4	47.5	60.5	77.3
Philippines	0.427	97	114	60.5	29.1	76.6	72.4	49.6	75.1
Viet Nam	0.304	67	54	27.3	26.7	66.2	77.7	73.2	83.5
E Asia and the Pacific	0.312	-	62	22.4	19.8	67.8	75.5	60.1	70.3
High HDI	0.289	-	38	26.6	22.3	69.5	75.7	55.0	75.5

Maternal mortality ratio is expressed in number of deaths per 100,000 live births and adolescent birth rate is expressed in number of births per 1,000 women ages 15 – 19.

Based on the sex-disaggregated Human Development Index (HDI), the **Gender Development Index (GDI)** is defined as a ratio of female to male HDI. The GDI measures gender inequalities across three dimensions of human development; health (measured by women's and men's life expectancy at birth); education (measured by expected years of schooling for children and mean years for men and women aged 25 years and older); and command over economic resources (measured by estimated Gross National Income GNI) per capita for women and men.

The GDI for 2017 is calculated for 164 countries. The 2017 female HDI is 0.753 in contrast to 0.756 for males. The GDI value for Thailand is 0.996 compared to the Philippines (1.000) and Viet Nam (1.005) (See Table 2).

Table 2: Thailand's GDI for 2017 relative to selected countries and groups Source: UNDP. 2018 Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update. Briefing note for countries on the 2018 Statistical Update

	Life expectancy at birth		Expected years of schooling		Mean years of schooling		GNI per capita		HDI value		F-M ratio
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	GDI Value
Thailand	79.3	71.8	14.8	14.5	7.4	7.8	13,793	17,327	0.753	0.756	0.996
Philippines	72.8	65.9	12.9	12.3	9.5	9.2	7,582	10,705	0.699	0.698	1.000

Viet Nam	81.0	71.8	12.9	12.5	7.9	8.5	5,345	6,383	0.696	0.692	1.005
E Asia and the Pacific	76.7	72.8	13.5	13.2	7.6	8.3	10,689	10,568	0.717	0.750	0.957
High HDI	78.2	74.0	14.3	13.9	8.0	8.6	10,945	18,948	0.740	0.773	0.957

The OECD’s Social Institutions and Gender Index (2019) considered 12 key indicators over the life cycle to show how Thailand (among other countries) performs across childhood, youth, adulthood, and older age. The indicators cover education, labour market and work, political representation, time use and social protection. Three indicators are for women only and the rest are given in the form of female-to-male ratio. Table 3 below shows how Thailand performs and includes the Philippines and Viet Nam for comparison. Thailand performs better than at least two thirds of countries (i.e., it is among the top third performers), better than at least one third but worse than at least one third (i.e., it is among the medium third performers), and worse than at least two thirds of countries (i.e., it is among the bottom third performers).

Table 3: Summary of Thailand’s performance on the Life-course gender gap dashboard relative to selected countries (Source: OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.)

	Childhood & youth (5 indicators)			Adulthood (6 indicators)			Older age (1 indicator)			Overall (12 indicators)			Missing indicators
	Top Third	Mid Third	Bottom Third	Top Third	Mid Third	Bottom Third	Top Third	Mid Third	Bottom Third	Top third	Mid third	Bottom third	
	Number of indicators												
TH	1	1	3	3	1	2	0	0	0	4	2	5	1
PH	2	2	1	1	3	0	0	0	1	3	5	2	2
VN	2	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	4	3	1	4

TH = Thailand; PH = the Philippines; VN = Vietnam

The Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) attempts to measure the prevalence of gender biases affecting gender equality. The index includes four dimensions – political, economic, educational, and physical integrity. According to GSNI, 95.47 % show a gender bias in at least one of the dimensions. 74.5 % show biases in two or more dimensions. Physical integrity is the dimension that indicate the strongest gender bias at 84.53%. This dimension uses proxies to measure attitudes to intimate partner violence and reproductive rights. For the political dimension, which measure attitudes to women as political leaders,

67.3% indicate that they have a bias. The economic and educational dimensions show 50.86% and 29.02% respectively.⁵

Per UN Women, challenges in realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women in Thailand remain in the areas of lack of sex disaggregated data, traditional attitudes and stereotypes which underpin domestic violence and violence against women, low participation of women in politics and decision-making positions, discrimination and vulnerabilities of ethnic and rural women as well as women in the informal sector, HIV prevalence, trafficking and exploitation.⁶

In addition, data drawn from draft national assessment on social dimension of CC impact report⁷, provides the following information: National poverty rate (2017) is 7.21% overall. Urban 5.49%, Rural 8.91%. Men 7.59%, Women 6.87%. Higher rates for both genders in the rural areas, 9.23% men and 8.61% women. Lower poverty rates for women in all regions. (National Statistic Office)

5.3 million people are in absolute poverty (living below national poverty line), 5.4 million are near poor (just above national poverty line). 1.5 million households are landless.

The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) in its 2017 report on poverty and inequality describes the general characteristics of Thailand's poor as follows:⁸

- *Individual characteristics:* low education, working in agricultural sector, landless, low income without job benefits
- *Household characteristics:* large-sized, skipped-generation, elderly or female-headed households most vulnerable to poverty with limited opportunity to engage in income generation
- *Concentration:* southern, north-eastern and northern regions, more rural than urban.

Agriculture Sector

Poverty tends to concentrate in farming households. According to the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), based on 2013/2014 data, farming households in the northeast have the highest rate of poverty with a regional average of 37.27 percent, followed by the north 26.09 percent, the central region 13.86 percent, and the south 9.57 percent.⁹ One-third of Thai labor force is in agriculture. Nearly 60 million rai of farm land is prone to drought or floods, and over 80% of which is outside of irrigated area.

The 2017 NESDB report also shows the highest incidence of poverty among children and elderly populations. Due to low income in agricultural work, young agricultural workforce migrated to cities for jobs, so by 2013, 1 in 4 Thai farmers were over the age of 55, leading to rise in “skipped-generation”

⁵ UNDP (2020). Tackling social norms: A game changer for gender inequalities.

⁶ <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/thailand>

⁷ Busakorn Suriyasarn & Pawin Talerngsri, (draft) *Social Dimension of Climate Change Impacts in Thailand: Analysis of Risks, Policy, Planning and Finance*, UNDP (forthcoming).

⁸ NESDB, รายงานการวิเคราะห์สถานการณ์ความยากจนและความเหลื่อมล้ำในประเทศไทย ปี 2560, September 2018, p. ช.

⁹ 2013/2014 figures. Office of Agricultural Economics, *ภาวะความยากจนของครัวเรือนเกษตร ปีเพาะปลูก 2556/7*, <http://www.oae.go.th/view/1/ภาวะความยากจนของครัวเรือนเกษตร/TH-TH>

households (grandparents living with grandchildren). There are some indications that there are more single elderly female-headed skipped-generation households than the male-headed ones.

In 2013, 1.4 million single-parent households (7.1% of all households); majority single-mother often in difficult situation. 400,000 skipped-generation households (2% and growing trend) (NESDB, 12th Development Plan). A growing number of Thai elders (38%, even male-female split) are living in vulnerable family situation (living alone, with elderly spouse or with grandchildren). 63% living in rural area. However, more elderly female heads in skipped-generation households (meaning more elderly women with grandchildren). About 20 percent of elders in skipped-generation households have income below the poverty line¹⁰ - more than twice the national poverty rate.

In the OAE analysis, factors contributing to poverty in farming households include geographical region, access to irrigation, age and education of head of household, number of family members, dependent burden, type of farmland, household net assets, and household debt. In the OAE's view, farming households in the northeast and the north are the most likely to be poor and should be prioritized in poverty reduction interventions.¹¹ The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) also stressed the need to reduce poverty with the priority for the north and northeast in the Twelfth Plan.

Roughly 40% of expenses of Thai household debts is spent on basic consumption, and 14% (formal) & 9.9% (informal) for agricultural activities, and 7.9% formal & 32.9% informal for businesses.

While the agricultural sector produces overall only 10 percent of the GDP, it is important for Thailand's rural economy, representing 31 percent of the GDP for the north, 28 percent for the south, 23 percent for the northeast, and 20 percent for the west.¹² GDP in 2014 value. NESDB. 2014 figures. Office of Agricultural Economics.¹³ The agricultural census carried out in 2013 showed an increased proportion of female land holders. In the Northern Region, women made up 28.7% of the landholders in 2013, compared to 20.7% in 2003.¹⁴

Focus group discussions were held in the project sites during project development, including 401 including as a sampling group. The number of female and male respondents was 199 and 202 persons, respectively. According to perceptions, the farmers in the four districts reported on the incidence of climate change related impacts in the long-term shifts over the last 10-20 years and adaptive strategies in coping with the shifts. The survey showed that 93% of the farmers feel a increase temperature and that the temperature becomes hotter, and 84-91% feel the change in rainfall amount and intensity, with greater concerns about drought. In response, a number of autonomous adaptation strategies have been undertaken by farmers. The most common were changing crops and/or crop patterns and timing. Some other strategies used were swapping to crops that were less water-intensive and stopping cultivating for a while to other career,

¹⁰ NESDB, *Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021)*.

¹¹ For ethnic dimension of poverty see: John Draper & Joel Sawat Selway, "A New Dataset on Horizontal Structural Ethnic Inequalities in Thailand in order to Address Sustainable Development Goal 10," *Social Indicators Research*, Springer, 2019

¹² GDP in 2014 value. NESDB.

¹³ <http://www.nso.go.th/sites/2014/Documents/info/Infographic59/2.Labor/9.Labor.pdf>

¹⁴ National Statistical Office (2013), [2013 Agricultural Census Northern Region](#), p. 17.

while the most extensively used approach by the farmers was an increasing dependence on groundwater use as a supplementary water supply. Success of autonomous adaptation can be improved through climate information and support to ensure choices are consistent with changing temperature and rainfall patterns.

Gender Division of Labour

Focus group discussions further indicated that women generally do the same activities in agricultural cultivation as men do. This is in addition to the role of caregiver for families and household work. This is consistent with a study in Northern Thailand¹⁵ where it was found that women often hold the primary responsibility for unpaid household labour (e.g. cleaning, cooking, childcare, and caring for home gardens for household food consumption). Another study by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) into gender roles and use of technology in Thailand found that while women were generally involved in all aspects of agricultural production, while men dominate mechanized tasks. Further, women have significantly reduced access to resources (e.g. inputs, funds/credit, seeds, breeds and plant varieties, and information and knowledge)¹⁶ and therefore decision-making power when it comes to agriculture activities.

Water insecurity creates livelihood-related challenges and potential losses of income. A shortage of water can add stress to women's lives through increased workloads (fetching water). Young women and children in Northern Thailand often work support their mothers with household labour. They also contribute to agricultural labour and subsequently household's income. Climate change increases water insecurity, increasing the burden particularly for women and children as primary household caretakers and agricultural labourers.^{17 18} Focus group discussions in the project sites indicate that for managing water usage group, the leaders are usually men. However, roles and responsibilities of women in these groups include vice president, financing and accounting as well as administrative positions.

A recent study indicated that reduced fertility, access to electricity and running water have contributed to easing rural women's lives and labour burdens. Even with these, women in rural Thailand still carry the bigger burden of domestic work than men. While it is several years old and the economic and social

¹⁵ Plan International. 2018. Climate change, young women and girls: Vulnerability, impacts, and adaptation in Northern Thailand.

¹⁶ FAO. 2003. Gender-responsive technology for poverty alleviation in Thailand. August 2003 <http://www.fao.org/3/ae538e/ae538e00.htm#Contents>

¹⁷ Andajani-Sutjahjo, S., Chirawatkul, S., Saito, E., 2015. Gender and Water in Northeast Thailand: Inequalities and Women's Realities. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 16, 200–212.

¹⁸ Plan International. 2018. Climate change, young women and girls: Vulnerability, impacts, and adaptation in Northern Thailand.

contexts have evolved, a 2001 national survey noted that in rural areas, women spent an average 5.4 hours a day on domestic tasks and childcare, compared to 2.9 hours for men.¹⁹

COVID-19 and the extent to which it could impact Thailand must be mentioned. As women are the primary caretakers, illness in the family would add to the responsibilities of women. One of the measures to contain the spread of the virus has been to close schools and care facilities, this is likely to have added to the burden of unpaid care work of women. As at 30 June 2020, there have been 3,171 diagnosed cases in Thailand, 12 of which were in the project sites. Restrictions are slowly being lifted and the related socio-economic impacts will be felt for the longer term. For a population of 65 million, the relatively low number of cases can be seen as a success towards containment. There is however uncertainty going forward as restrictions continue to be lifted and international travel re-opens.

Access to Resources

Thailand's Constitution (Articles 33 and 41) and the Civil and Commercial Code (Section 1336) state that women and men have the same rights to own, use, and make decisions regarding land and non-land assets. The law allows for joint land titling and co-ownership of property for married and unmarried couples. Women and men's equal right to inheritance is protected by Thailand's Civil and Commercial Code and traditionally the youngest daughter inherits most of the property.²⁰²¹ Customary law still influences decision-making in rural areas communities, with communal rules allocating resources, decision-making, and conflict resolution in ways that may disadvantage women's access to land, property and inheritance.^{22 23} The Civil and Commercial Code stipulates that, after divorce, commonly held property (*Sin Somros*) is to be divided equally between man and woman (Thailand, 1925, Sec. 1533). Spouses manage his or her own individual property (*Sin Suan Tua*) (Thailand, 1925, Sec. 1473). In administering common marital property, either the spouses are joint managers, or one spouse must obtain consent from the other (Thailand, 1925, Sec. 1476).²⁴

Women and men have the same rights to open bank accounts, obtain credit, and access formal financial services.²⁵ Government measures such as the National Village and Urban Community Fund extends loans to villages and urban communities and provides vocational training and try to reach women and men.²⁶

¹⁹ Fox, L., Wiggins, S., Ludi, E. and Mdee, A. 2018. The lives of rural women and girls What does an inclusive agricultural transformation that empowers women look like? Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

²⁰ FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), 2017. Gender and Land Rights Database: Thailand. Available at: http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/country-profiles/countries-list/customary-law/en/?country_iso3=THA

²¹ OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

²² FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), 2017. Gender and Land Rights Database: Thailand. Available at: http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/country-profiles/countries-list/customary-law/en/?country_iso3=THA

²³ OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

²⁴ OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

²⁵ World Bank, 2016. Women Business and the Law: Getting to Equal. Available at: <http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2016/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2016.pdf>

²⁶ OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

Social norms, inequitable power dynamics, and the gendered division of labour affect women's and men's access to resources in Northern Thailand. This includes water.²⁷ Men typically have greater rights of access to, and decision-making power over water. Women in rural areas, particularly poor women of ethnic minority, may face disproportionate water insecurity compared to rural men and people in urban areas due to overlapping sources of vulnerability and marginalization (Plan International, 2018).

A recent study demonstrates some of the challenges faced at the community level around land ownership, the pattern of which is mixed in Thailand. Forty percent of the participants in focus group discussions indicated that, in practice, they have access to, and decision-making power over land but are unsure of their formal ownership status. In 30 percent of the FGDs, participants mentioned that new property (land as well as house) is commonly registered under the wife's name because men tend to avoid paperwork and prefer to work in the field.²⁸

Education

Thailand's 1999 Education Act grants "all children, without discrimination" a right to a quality education and the Ministry of Education supports all children a twelve-year education. From a gender perspective, Thailand has been very successful at promoting the right to girls' education. Between the years 2005 to 2010, the primary school completion rate for girls in school was 89 % while the completion rate for boys was 97 percent. While there are still fewer girls than boys attending primary school, the gender gap has decreased considerably from slightly more than 8 % in 1971 to slightly less than two percent in 2009.²⁹ By 2012, there was little difference in enrolment between urban and rural areas.³⁰

In 1998, the Child-Friendly School (CFS) initiative was launched to promote education for all, and many of CFS's activities are ongoing in Thailand today. Yet, girls continue to face challenges accessing education including poverty, language, and mobility/distance to school. Marginalized populations also face challenges.³¹

From the perspective of higher education, women have more opportunities than men. However, although 53 percent of science students in higher education are female, less than 24 percent of women study engineering, manufacturing and construction studies. In recent years, Thailand's Ministry of Education

²⁷ Plan International. 2018. Climate change, young women, and girls: Vulnerability, impacts and adaptation in Northern Thailand.

²⁸ Aktera, S., Rutsaert, P., Luis, J., Htwe, NM., San, S.S., Raharjo, B., Pustaka, A. 2017. Women's empowerment and gender equity in agriculture: A different perspective from Southeast Asia. in Food Policy, Vol. 69, May 2017. pp 270-279.

²⁹ The Borgen Project. 10 Extremely Important Facts about Girls' Education in Thailand. Blog July 5, 2018. <https://borgenproject.org/facts-about-girls-education-in-thailand/>

³⁰ Fox, L., Wiggins, S., Ludi, E. and Mdee, A. 2018. The lives of rural women and girls What does an inclusive agricultural transformation that empowers women look like? Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

³¹ The Borgen Project. 10 Extremely Important Facts about Girls' Education in Thailand. Blog July 5, 2018. <https://borgenproject.org/facts-about-girls-education-in-thailand/> accessed 23 May 2018.

has worked to promote Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education among Thai girls.³²

Health

Thailand has worked to ensure wide access to health services including sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. A primary health care system expanded to sub-districts beginning in the 1980s and access to health care became more equitable. From a gender perspective, achievements include the following: 80% of pregnant women used prenatal care in 1987 and 92% in 2000. With Universal Health Care (UHC), use reached 100% in 2012. Birth attendance increased from 90.8% in 1990 to 99.7% in 2012. Further, contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) increased from 14.8% in 1970 to 79.3 % in 2012. The total fertility rate also fell from 5.9 children per woman in the 1970s to 1.6 in 2011.³³

Challenges continue however, including the increase in adolescent birth rate from 31 per 1000 women aged 15 – 19 year in 2000 to 53 in 2012. The adolescent birth rate has sharply increased from 31 per 1000 women aged 15–19 years in 2000 to 53 in 2012. Unmet need for contraception is 6.9% higher among women aged 15–19 years (11.6%) than among women aged 45–49 years (8.3%).³⁴

Women still face challenges accessing safe abortions even though it is permitted by law, when conducted by a physician, if the pregnancy threatens a woman's life or health, or is the result of a sexual crime. Official reports suggest that about 30,000 abortions occur each year (including induced, spontaneous and therapeutic), but other estimates go as high as 200,000–300,000 annually, suggesting that abortion is widely practiced³⁵

Indigenous peoples in rural Thailand experience health inequities as demonstrated by a recent study in Northern Thailand.³⁶ Healthcare is limited or not available in rural areas and indigenous people are less likely to access public health services, leading to negative health consequences. Many women with preventable diseases (e.g. cervical cancer and HIV/AIDS) are indigenous and face discrimination for being women and being indigenous; this discrimination also affects their access to healthcare. Further, the unequal labour distribution in their households can also lead to unequal opportunities for indigenous women to seek healthcare, invest in educational and vocational skills, and participate in paid work.

³²The Borgen Project. 10 Extremely Important Facts about Girls' Education in Thailand. Blog July 5, 2018.

<https://borgenproject.org/facts-about-girls-education-in-thailand/>

³³ Tangcharoensathien V, Chaturachinda K, Im-em W. Commentary: Thailand: sexual and reproductive health before and after universal health coverage in 2002. *Glob Public Health*. 2015;10(2):246–248. doi:10.1080/17441692.2014.986166

³⁴ Tangcharoensathien V, Chaturachinda K, Im-em W. Commentary: Thailand: sexual and reproductive health before and after universal health coverage in 2002. *Glob Public Health*. 2015;10(2):246–248. doi:10.1080/17441692.2014.986166

³⁵ Tangcharoensathien V, Chaturachinda K, Im-em W. Commentary: Thailand: sexual and reproductive health before and after universal health coverage in 2002. *Glob Public Health*. 2015;10(2):246–248. doi:10.1080/17441692.2014.986166

³⁶ Onouma Thummapol, Sylvia Barton, Tanya Park. Healthcare Access Experiences Among Indigenous Women in Northern Rural Thailand: A Focused Ethnographic Study in *Central Asian Journal of Global Health*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2018.

The impacts of COVID-19 in Thailand and in the world are not yet fully known. The project beneficiaries are expected to be vulnerable agriculture households, many female-headed and including elderly, which are in a high risk category.

Political Participation

Article 65 of the Constitution states that men and women in Thailand have the same rights to hold public and political office in the executive, judiciary and legislative branches (Thailand, 2007). There are no legal quotas at national or local levels. Further, the government provides incentives to encourage women’s political participation, including training for female political candidates, public education campaigns, and pushing for quotas within political parties. Even though women have the same rights, they face cultural barriers to political participation. For example, patriarchal norms pose challenges to women who run for office at the local level – norms that expect them to stay at home. Election rigging, corruption, and patron-client relationships also complicate women’s advancement in the political arena and their advancement.³⁷

Women are still underrepresented in public and private sectors, including in the parliament, government, judiciary and administration both at national and local levels. Thailand has ranked as one of the lowest countries for gender equality in politics in the region of Asia and the Pacific.³⁸ The percentage of women in provincial and local governments in Thailand is much lower than that of the national government. There is only one female governor from 76 provinces (1.32%).³⁹ Female Chiefs of Provincial Administrative Organizations (PAO) and Sub-district Administrative Organizations (SAO) account for 8% and 6.45% respectively.⁴⁰

In reference to agriculture, a recent study on gender equity in agriculture in Southeast Asia found that women in Thailand were active members of village and agricultural organizations and had direct contact with extension officers. Women’s involvement in decision making in rice farming was observed to be greater in Thailand compared to the Philippines, Indonesia, and Myanmar – other countries in the study.⁴¹

Gender-based Violence

Patriarchal norms and attitudes in Thailand contribute to violence against women in the public and private spheres. Thailand does not currently have one overarching law addressing all forms of violence against women. The Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act of 2007 criminalizes domestic violence and perpetrators are liable to imprisonment of up to six months or a fine (Thailand, 2007b, Art. 4). The law extends to current and former partners, and includes physical and psychological violence (Thailand, 2007b). While the definition does not specify sexual and economic violence, these can fall under the law, as domestic violence is broadly defined as “any act done with the intention or in the manner likely to

³⁷ OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

³⁸ <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/03/women-in-politics-2019-map>

³⁹ Prae Province (appointed October 2019)

⁴⁰ Data from King Prajadhipok’s Institute 2017.

⁴¹ Aktera, S., Rutsaert, P., Luis, J., Htwe, NM., San, S.S., Raharjo, B., Pustaka, A. 2017. Women’s empowerment and gender equity in agriculture: A different perspective from Southeast Asia. in Food Policy, Vol. 69, May 2017. pp 270-279.

cause harm to the body, mind or health of a family member” and “to exert coercion or immoral influence over a family member in order to wrongfully cause him to do, not to do or yield to any act” (Thailand, 2007b, Art. 3).⁴²

Rape is criminalized by the Penal Code of 1965, and the subsequent Criminal Code Amendment Act of 2007. The Amendment Act removed the provision allowing a husband to rape his wife. (OECD, 2019, SIGI Thailand). The Labour Protection Act of 2008 and the Penal Code foresee legal protection in the workplace and the Labour Protection Act extends protection against sexual abuse, harassment or nuisance by superiors to cover all workers, both female and male, with penalties up to THB 20 000 baht (Thailand, 2008). Sexual harassment continues to be an issue in the workplace, and women may be verbally and physically abused in the workplace, pressured to trade sexual favours for career advancement opportunities, and face risks of violence when traveling between their home and workplace.⁴³

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is perceived as a private or a family matter, and is considered to be underreported in Thailand. Statistics show that the numbers of reported domestic violence cases have risen from 25,767 to 31,866 between 2010 and 2013 respectively (Thai Health Promotion Foundation 2011), (The Women's Affairs and Family Development 2013). In addition, the report from the OSCC, Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) found that, in 2015, there were 23,977 women who used their services. Recent region-specific data is lacking, however, a report 2011 report indicates a higher proportion in the North and Central regions, and there was a correlation with limited education⁴⁴.

Graph 1: Proportion of married women 15-19 years old who experienced physical violence in the past year, 2009 (Report on Gender-based Violence Against Women and Girl (VAW/G) Indicators; Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, with support from UNDP Thailand, 2011)

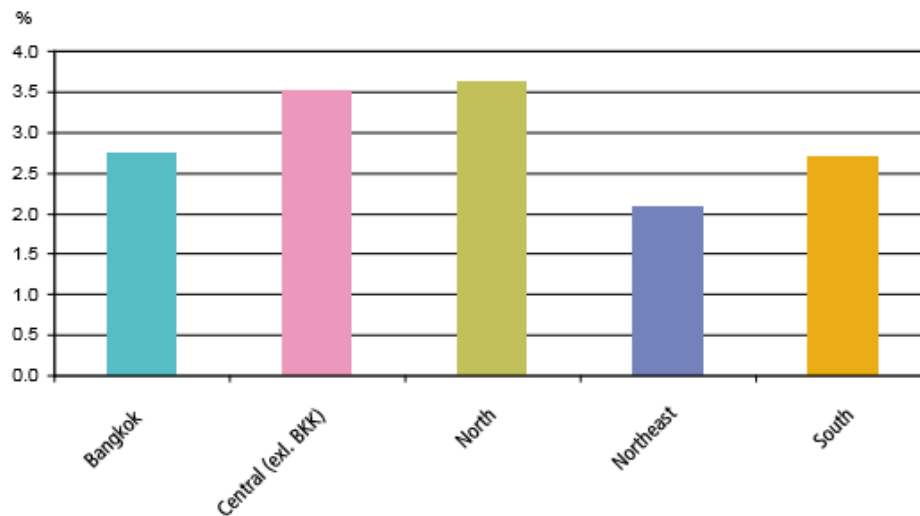
⁴² OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

⁴³ OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

⁴⁴ Report on Gender-based Violence Against Women and Girl (VAW/G) Indicators; Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, with support from UNDP Thailand, 2011

Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, with support from UNDP Thailand, 2011)

Proportion of married women 15-49 years old who experienced physical violence in the past year, 2009



The Domestic Violence Act enables government officials to make available medical, social and psychological assistance to survivors of domestic violence. The Thai government had implemented preventative measures including the establishment of shelters and half-way homes for children and families in crisis, One Stop Crisis Centres to provide physical and psychosocial health services to victims of sexual and domestic violence, and a 24-hour hotline. Police officers are said to be trained in gender perspectives and the psychological nature of sexual violence victims, and certain courts have integrated women-friendly measures such as the provision of counselling services and the separation of victims and perpetrators.⁴⁵ The Department of Women’s Affair and Family Development Learning Centres hears complaints of gender discrimination and the Committee on Consideration of Gender Discrimination ensures that victims of gender discrimination receive legal remedies and compensation.⁴⁶ However, Thailand has been criticized under CEDAW for the lack of access to justice for survivors of gender-based violence. The criticism includes issues such as law enforcement officials’ negative attitudes resulting in failure of register and investigate complaints.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2019: Thailand.

⁴⁶ Thailand's Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, June 2018 <http://www.mfa.go.th/sep4sdgs/contents/filemanager/images/sep/VNR%202018%20English%2010.07.18.pdf>

⁴⁷ CEDAW/C/THA/CO/6-7

IV. Legal and Administrative Framework Protecting Women and Gender Equality

From the perspective of key international commitments protecting women and gender equality, in 2000, Thailand ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1985 and its Optional Protocol and endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and finally the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Thailand has made significant efforts to integrate the international principles and instruments into the policy and programming framework, evident in the Constitution B.E. 2550 (2007), which has anti sex discrimination and gender equality provisions.

A Working Group for the Implementation of SDG 5 supports the implementation of the Goal. Representatives from government agencies and civil society such as the Thailand Sustainable Development Foundation, the Association to Empower the Potential of Women with Disabilities (AEPWWDs), the Foundation for Women, Homenet Thailand Foundation for Labour and Employment Promotion and WeMove are all active in the Working Group. The Working Group allows government agencies and civil society to exchange information, as well as discuss future direction in the implementation of SDG 5.⁴⁸

The Strategy for Women’s Development Plan (2017 – 2021) is Thailand’s main mechanism for promoting women’s development; it aligns with SDG 5 (Gender Equality). The Strategy has the vision of “[creating] social equality without discrimination, for women to have good quality of life, be safe and secure.” The Government also designed an action plan to implement the Strategy. The action plan focuses on community development, for example, the Vocational Training Program for Women and Families which provides training for the unemployed, educationally disadvantaged, and people at risk of sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

The Department of Women’s Affairs and Family Development, of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, is the national women’s machinery responsible for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, and social inclusion. It serves as a secretariat of the National Inter-ministerial Committee on Policy and Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Women, chaired by the Prime Minister and develops. The Office implements a five-year cycled National Women’s Development Plans, which currently falls under the period of 2012-2016.⁴⁹

In 2015, Thailand passed its first law to promote gender equality, namely the Gender Equality Act B.E. 2558, which aims to provide protection to all people from gender discrimination. It was Thailand’s first legal instrument to specifically mention transgender people. Further, the Department of Women’s Affairs and Family Development recognizes the different challenges faced by people whose gender identity do

⁴⁸ Thailand’s Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, June 2018 <http://www.mfa.go.th/sep4sdgs/contents/filemanager/images/sep/VNR%202018%20English%2010.07.18.pdf>

⁴⁹ UN Women: Thailand <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/thailand>

not match their sex assigned at birth.⁵⁰ However, the Act has been criticized by the CEDAW Committee for making exceptions on issues related to religious principles and national security.⁵¹

Thailand's 2017 Voluntary National Review on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reported that women's status in Thailand has drastically improved in Thailand over the past several decades. The country has achieved gender parity in basic education with women doing slightly better in higher education and the proportion of women in poverty than men overall. While noting that Thailand is recognized as having among the most favourable conditions for women entrepreneurship in Asia and the Pacific,⁵² the Review also recognized the low representation of women in the public sector, in particular in national politics, in government leadership positions and in local administration. The 2017 Constitution calls for gender responsive budgeting, stipulating that the government should take into account the different necessities and needs with respect to gender, age, and conditions of persons to ensure fairness. The 2017 Voluntary National Review also noted that elements of SDG 5 would be included in the Women Development Strategy (2017-2021), which recognizes that Thailand has fallen short on several international goals and measures and the country needs to step up efforts in women's development and promote a more equal society. Thailand considers the development of a gender-disaggregated database a next step in its effort to achieve gender equality. The Government reaffirmed its commitment in 2017 to work with all stakeholders at both national and international levels for the successful promotion of gender equality and sustainable development.⁵³

The weak gender dimension in Thai policy has been observed by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In CEDAW's 2017 Concluding Observations on the state of gender equality in Thailand, the Committee expressed a particular concern for the situation of rural Thai women, including indigenous women and those ethnic and religious minorities, remain disproportionately affected by poverty and limited economic opportunities. CEDAW spells out that Thai women, in particular rural women, are also excluded from participation in the elaboration and implementation of policies and action plans on climate change and disaster risk reduction, despite the fact they are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change and disasters.⁵⁴

Besides lack of clear policy directives on the integration of gender equality and limited participation of women in the formulation and implementation of climate policies and plans, another key challenge in gender and social inclusion in on climate change action is lack of disaggregated data.

⁵⁰ UNDP, MSDHS. May 2018. Legal Gender Recognition in Thailand: A Legal and Policy Review

⁵¹ CEDAW/C/THA/CO/6-7

⁵² According to Mastercard Women's Entrepreneurial Index 2016.

⁵³ Thailand's Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, June 2017, p. 21.

⁵⁴ CEDAW Concluding Observations on state of gender equality – Thailand 2017, p. 11.

V. Gender Analysis and Recommendations

This gender analysis acts as an entry point for addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment through: i.) strategic approaches, i.e. with interventions targeted specifically at women and girls and ii.) mainstreamed approaches, i.e. ensuring that all areas of the project promote the transformation of gender inequalities to strengthen climate resilience and provide greater opportunities for all rural people to adopt adaptation options that reduce their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and strengthen the climate resilience of households and communities in the areas directly and indirectly targeted by the project.

Over 50% of project beneficiaries are expected to be women, please see table below. The project should ensure that the particular climate challenges and needs faced by women in water management and agriculture are fully captured in project implementation. These include disadvantages related to:

- Access to information about climate change and related impacts on water and agriculture, and related ability to disseminate information
- Decision making related water use/management and agriculture
- Access to technology and related training to advance climate resilient agriculture
- Access to finance to invest in climate resilient agriculture

Table 4: Project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender

Beneficiary areas			Number of household and population			
Province	District	Sub-district	Household	Population	Male	Female
Uttaradit	Phichai	Thamafuang	1,286	3,987	1,920	2,067
		Korrum	695	2,155	1,034	1,121
		Phrayaman	1,361	4,219	2,025	2,194
Sukhothai	Srinakorn	Klongmaplup	23	71	34	37
		Nongbuo	105	325	156	169
	Khongkairas	Kokrat	1,320	4,092	1,967	2,125
		Krainok	1,744	5,407	2,595	2,812
		Kraiklang	723	2,241	1,070	1,171
		Krainai	317	983	472	511
		Baanmaisukasem	1,272	3,943	1,899	2,044
		donydoei	44	136	65	71
	Sawankhalok	Paknam	431	1,336	645	691
Phitsanulok	Promphiram	Nongkham	852	2,641	1,268	1,373
		Wanywoon	2,453	7,604	3,670	3,934
		Sriphrom	1,568	4,861	2,385	2,476
		Thaloktiem	1,260	3,906	1,875	2,031
		Matong	121	375	180	195
		Thachang	485	1,504	722	782
		Banyrakham	1,834	5,685	2,749	2,936
		Choomsaeng songklam	1,381	4,281	2,085	2,196
		Banyrakham	99	307	147	160
	Muang	Baankrang	626	1,941	932	1,009
Total			20,000	62,000	29,896	32,104

The project is aligned with national gender equality and women’s empowerment related policies and programmes as well as international commitments under the Paris Agreement, CEDAW, SDGs, etc. The project will aim to support transformational change towards gender equality and women’s empowerment and will:

- Seek to understand in greater depth the potentially gender-differentiated knowledge, experience, and skills of women and men at sub-district, district and provincial levels as well as their needs, challenges, and vulnerabilities (e.g. around access to resources, decision-making, etc.) in order to strengthen project interventions including information sharing between implementers and beneficiaries, decision-making around adaptation at community and household levels, production, post-harvest, and market development decisions, etc. This can be done through introducing/piloting approaches such as gender-responsive participatory Integrated Climate

Services for Agriculture (PICSA) and piloting and scaling up household methodologies (HHM).^{55 56} Several organizations have championed these approaches which have been applied in several in different regions to strengthen agricultural livelihoods, production, and value chain/market development, etc.

- Formulate a working group on gender. The gender focal point of each ministries (national level) will be informed about the project implementation. The project management team, led by the Royal Irrigation Department will invite a member from a provincial representative of the Women Empowerment Fund, Krungsri Bank, BAAC, female head of villages, Tambon Administrative Office, water user groups, FFS in the project provinces, Yom-Nan river basin committee, as well as a co-operatives in the project provinces. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) is mandated to promote gender equality and is therefore important to engage on issues related to gender. MSDHS has staff working on issues such as gender responsive budgeting and planning, which would be useful to engage in the project. Equally important will it be to use and try to strengthen the system on gender focal points appointed within each ministry.
- Due to the low level of women in decision-making roles in Thailand, which also applies to water management, efforts to promote and support women in these roles will be done throughout the project. This might also include ensuring that there are enabling environments, including working with men to alter harmful stereotypes.
- Ensure capacity building includes the active participation of women and men and incorporates, where relevant, issues around gender and climate information services, market development, farmer engagement, irrigation, use of innovative technology, etc.
- Given the lower percentage of land owned by women, the project needs to ensure their equal participation by providing an enabling environment for participation. The project also needs to have a broader inclusion of households members, not only focusing on the person who the land is registered on.
- Mitigate any negative impacts on rural women and girls (e.g. in terms of benefit sharing, labour division of labour, access to resources, access to technology and skills development, etc.) Where possible, enhance role of new generation, both female and male youth (aged 18-25) to build a

⁵⁵ For more about PICSA approaches, see, for example <https://ccafs.cgiar.org/participatory-integrated-climate-services-agriculture-picsa#.XOlq5Y9IDIU>

⁵⁶ For more about Household Methodologies (HHM), see, for example <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40198517/Household+methodologie+-+harnessing+the+family%27s+potential+for+change.pdf/cb0ab278-bfb4-4b4c-a237-e7841bc9e9aa>
For more on Household Methodologies, particularly the Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) approach, See Mayoux, L. 2017. Gender Action Learning for Sustainability at Scale:: Pilot in Kyrgyzstan, May – Nov 2016 https://gamechangenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/GALS-Process-for-RWEE-Naryn-Pilot - ConsolidatedReport_Feb2017_ed.pdf

For more on adapting GALS in agricultural extension, Value Chain (VC) development and Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA), see PELUM. 2016. Models of Integrating GALS in Functional Adult Literacy, Agricultural Extension, Advocacy, Village Savings and Lending Associations https://uganda.oxfam.org/sites/uganda.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/Adapting-GALS-in-development-programmes-FINAL.pdf

new generation of farmers equipped with knowledge and skills to build climate resilience in their community.

- Ensure that the Grievance Redress Mechanism is gender- and age inclusive and responsive, addressing potential barriers to women and marginalized groups. Raise awareness of the grievance mechanism among all impacted by project activities. For the grievance mechanism to be able to adequately respond to complaints raised by women or marginalized groups, staff members will be trained on gender sensitivity. Furthermore, a protocol on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse will be adopted to ensure that any complaints related to such issues are adequately managed.
- Although an increased risk of GBV is not considered to be high for the planned project activities, strategies will be put in place to monitor and mitigate GBV. The measures will follow CARE’s Guidance for Gender Based Violence (GBV) Monitoring and Mitigation within Non-GBV Focused Sectoral Programming.⁵⁷ This includes activities such as capacity building of project staff and implementing partners, development of protocols on GBV, and putting a referral list in place.
- Include a Gender Specialist to ensure that the needs and challenges faced by women are appropriately reflected in interventions. The Gender Specialist will support community consultations, data collection and mainstreaming of gender issues (and where relevant, strategic approaches targeted specifically at women/girls across all areas of the project);
- Link with institutions who can provide training to agricultural extension workers on uptake of household methodologies (e.g. Gender Action Learning Systems or GALs) in their work with women and men in vulnerable rural households and communities to complement, strengthen, and leverage farmer to farmer sharing of climate information, Value Chain (VC) and market access opportunities
- Build/strengthen linkages with institutions/networks that can strengthen gender approaches throughout the project (e.g. academic institute, agriculture and other relevant research centres, etc.). The project should also consider linking to existing women’s groups, housewife groups, credit groups.
- Contributions to disaggregated data should be an integral part of any project for future sustainability. Build data collection and management in the process of capacity development at all levels. Technical support with integrated gender and social inclusion for each project/program.
- Ensure that good practices and lessons learned from the project around integrating participatory, gender transformative approaches in climate adaptation are documented and shared among stakeholders including line ministries, policymakers, and government/non-government decision-makers/planners/implementers at national and sub-national level and beyond (e.g.

⁵⁷ CARE (2014), [Guidance for Gender Based Violence \(GBV\) Monitoring and Mitigation within Non-GBV Focused Sectoral Programming](#)

regional/international). This may also contribute to reporting on international commitments such as NDCs, etc.

- Women generally carry out the same activities in agricultural cultivation as men do, and perhaps even more. For water-usage managing groups, the leaders are usually men. However, women in these groups hold roles and responsibilities including vice president, financing and accounting and various administrative positions. It is therefore important to ensure that women are encouraged and supported in leadership positions, and not exclusively to administrative roles.
- Thailand creates a supportive mechanism to promote female business start-up for agricultural business. The mechanism builds on an existing agricultural cooperative and a community enterprise that female and LGBT always active in leading the cooperative management in their hometown. It also creates job for local resident.
- Ensure complementarity with, and learn from best practices and lessons learned from “Gender Bond” - Krungsri Bank has prepared a gender bond. The bank will provide loans for female entrepreneurs. Women in the project location can access this loan via Krungsri Branch Offices nationwide. <https://www.nationthailand.com/business/30377667>
- The project will make a case of women leadership to the existing mechanism such as business start-up, social enterprise, community enterprise, co-operative of rice, fruit, flower, etc.

The gender analysis and action plan should be reviewed and updated regularly. This is particularly relevant in the context of COVID-19, as the impacts on health and livelihoods are not yet fully known or understood.