

Gender Analysis/ Assessment and Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan

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Part I: Introduction

MCSSEAFP is a \$202m fund that focuses on climate adaptation within South-East Asia's food and agriculture sector. The programme will focus on 4 countries across the region: Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam and seek to address the existing barriers of allocation of capital to scale the climate adaptation strategies across food and agri businesses.

Following the Board approval of the Programme with a total size of USD 154 million in B.43, Vietnam has been added as an additional Programme country, alongside the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. To accommodate the inclusion of Vietnam, the total Programme size has increased from USD 154 million to USD 202 million. This increase is entirely attributable to additional co-financing for the equity investment component and does not result in any increase in GCF funding.

Globally, women farmers face significant challenges due to persistent gender gaps in the agriculture sector. According to a 2023 FAO report, gender inequalities in food and agriculture result in global economic losses of approximately US\$1 billion. They often experience lower yields and productivity compared to men, largely due to limited access to essential resources such as inputs, labor, and extension services. Despite forming a substantial share of the agricultural labor force, these barriers limit women's productivity and their contributions to overall agricultural output, hindering economic growth.

Addressing these gender disparities is crucial for agricultural development and food security. Empowering women and integrating gender perspectives into agricultural policies and programs can significantly boost yields, improve sustainability, and enhance national agricultural output. Reducing gender gaps in agriculture is projected to decrease global food insecurity by two percentage points, lifting 45 million people out of food insecurity. Tackling these challenges could generate transformative impacts, fostering economic growth and resilience in communities worldwide.

MCSSEAFP will seek to address gender barriers at three level discussed further below:

1. Reducing the gender gap that exists in technology adoption and financial resources present in the agriculture sector.
2. Increasing representation and participation of women in the development of climate adaptation strategies across SSEA.
3. Increasing adaptive capacity of women to climate change across SSEA.

Efforts to address these gender barriers involve implementing policies that promote gender equality, providing targeted support and training for women farmers, and fostering an inclusive and enabling environment for women's participation in agriculture. Additionally, awareness campaigns and initiatives that challenge gender stereotypes and norms are crucial for promoting more equitable opportunities in the agricultural sector.

Explanation of Barrier 1:

A significant proportion of the workforce in crucial livelihood sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, energy, and manufacturing are composed of women. However, persistent inequalities, especially for women from marginalized groups, expose them to heightened vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

1. **Financing:** Women tend to have less opportunities than their male counterparts to be access and finance climate related agricultural technologies.
2. **Ownership:** Gender-based disparities in access to and control over farm resources are widespread, and women are frequently relegated to the lower levels of the agricultural value chain. These inequalities affect rural women's ability to adapt to climate change, as they often lack vital resources, such as land, water and forests, or information, financing, and technologies for adaptation. For instance, only 24.2% of land is registered under female in Indonesia.
3. **Unpaid workers:** 26.7% of working women in the region are employed in agriculture and nearly half of all farmers are estimated to be women. However, official counts often overlook women working without pay, in informal settings, or at home.
4. **Leadership role and decision making:** Women face underrepresentation in leadership roles and decision-making processes within the sector. For instance, they also have limited decision-making power over critical adaptive practices and technologies, such as irrigation.

Explanation of Barrier 2:

Women farmers often have limited access to tools and information that they participate in community-level decision-making, or to implement adaptation measures of their own.

A study in Southeast Asia found that technical information and access to technologies was often given to men even though it was the women were adapting by diversifying crops, obtaining more resistant varieties, or engaging in new cash-oriented livelihoods — and thus could have used the knowledge.

In some cases, even though tools are available to all it will benefit men far more than women. For instance, in Ninh Thuan province in Viet Nam, a study showed that even though women were given equal access to a drought forecasting tool, in practice they had limited opportunities to take advantage of it. It is therefore crucial to understand the context of women farmers' lives and the particular limitations they face, while also recognizing that, with the right support, women can be powerful agents of change, drawing on their knowledge and skills.

Explanation of Barrier 3:

Climate change presents significant challenges to socio-economic development, especially in SSEA where most of the economies depend on climate-sensitive sectors, including agriculture and food sectors. Climate change is also expected to worsen existing poverty and exacerbate inequalities, especially for those disadvantaged by gender. It has been shown through studies that women are more vulnerable to the devastating effects of climate change due to their limited access and control over productive and economic assets and resources that could help them to combat the threats of climate change.

Part II: Gender Assessment – country profile

Methodology:

To inform the design of the Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan (GAP) for MCSSEAFP, Mandala Capital undertook a comprehensive gender analysis across all four focus countries, with a strong emphasis on the agriculture sector. This analysis sought to identify key barriers, roles, rights, needs, and opportunities for both women and men engaged in the agri-food value chain.

The assessment applied a dual-method approach combining (1) desk-based research and (2) in-country stakeholder engagement, ensuring both depth of evidence and contextual relevance.

Desk- Based Research: The desk review covered national policies, laws, gender commitments, sectoral strategies, demographic data, and government performance in gender equality across the agriculture sector. The research drew on credible international and regional sources, including the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), among others. This analysis provided the foundation for understanding structural gender inequalities and national gender policy frameworks.

Stakeholder Engagement: To complement the desk review and validate findings, MCSSEAFP conducted targeted consultations with several stakeholders. This included management and staff (both women and men) of pipeline agribusinesses; National Designated Authorities (NDAs); Relevant ministries and government departments.

For example, MCSSEAFP engaged with the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection in Indonesia, including the Deputy Assistants for Gender Equality in Economic Affairs and Socio-Cultural Affairs through its consultation with the NDA.

Another example, in Philippines our pipeline company works actively with local women’s associations and cooperatives to ensure women have access to quality seeds, training, and guaranteed markets. In Indonesia, another pipeline company collaborated closely with women farmers in Sumatran highland coffee communities to design and implement water systems that reduced women’s and girls’ workload. These practical insights were instrumental in shaping both the gender assessment and the corresponding Gender Action Plan, ensuring that proposed interventions are evidence-based, locally relevant, and aligned with national priorities.

These are part of ongoing consultations that will continue throughout programme implementation to ensure that the findings are validated and meaningfully anchored in local contexts. Further consultations with women’s right group will be undertaken during the programme.

Gender Assessment:

The assessment highlighted that the potential disparities in the vulnerabilities of men and women is likely to be impacted and worsened by the effect of climate change.

Although women’s participation in agriculture in Asia as a wage labour has increased in recent decades, women’s wage rate in agriculture has remain much lower than men. Despite women’s significant contribution in paid and unpaid work, they own fewer resources than men and lack access to land, capital, information, inputs, training, and markets. In 2022, 37% of women employed in Southeast Asia worked in agriculture, compared to 33% of women in South Asia.¹ The assessment examined the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), Gender Inequality composite indices, and other country-specific indicators underlined below:

Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI):

¹ Asian Development Bank. (n.d.). *Gender and development*. Asian Development Bank. Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/what-we-do/topics/gender>

The OECD Development Centre's Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) provides a cross-country measure of discrimination against women in social institutions, encompassing formal and informal laws, social norms, and practices across 180 countries. The SIGI evaluates four key dimensions of discriminatory social institutions that impact women's socio-economic opportunities:

- Discrimination in the family captures the power dynamics within the household and evaluates the extent to which girls and women are undervalued. Do women and men have equal decision-making power at home? Do they benefit from equal inheritance and divorce rights? Can women and men marry at the same age?
- Restricted physical integrity captures social institutions that make women and girls vulnerable in these areas and limit their control over their bodies and reproductive autonomy. Are women protected from all forms of violence, including intimate partner violence, rape and sexual harassment, and female genital mutilation? To what extent are new-born girls being discriminated against? Are women's reproductive health and rights adequately protected?
- Restricted access to productive and financial resources captures women's restricted access to and control over such critical productive and economic resources and assets. Do women and men have equal legal rights to access land and non-land assets? Do they have equal legal rights to open a bank account and obtain credit from a formal financial institution? Do women and men benefit from the same rights and opportunities in the workplace, whether in terms of maternity/paternity and parental leave or in terms of choosing their profession or registering a business?
- Restricted civil liberties capture social institutions that restrict women's access to and participation and voice in the public and social spheres. Do women and men have the same citizenship/nationality rights? Are they able to travel freely within and outside their country on equal terms? Do they have the same legal rights to vote and hold public and political office? Do they have the same rights to access justice?

MCSSEAFP countries targeted rank between 24 and 50 on the SIGI.

The below table highlights the targeted countries ranking on the SIGI:²

Table 1: Social Institutions and Gender Index

Country	Social Institutions and Gender Index	Discrimination in the family	Restricted Physical Integrity	Restricted access to productive and financial resources	Restricted civil liberties
Vietnam	24.5	38.3	37.6	7.7	10.1
Indonesia	44.6	80.3	32.3	17.8	36.5
Philippines	49.7	56.9	49.1	50.4	41.6
Thailand	32.6	39	20.2	21.9	46.8

Gender Inequality Index (GII): The GII is a composite measure of gender inequality. A lower GII value indicates greater equality between women and men, while a higher value reflects greater inequality.

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gender-based disparities across three key dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and labor market participation. It highlights the loss in potential human development caused by inequalities between women and men in these areas. The index ranges

² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard*. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://www.genderindex.org>

from 0, indicating equality between genders, to 1, representing maximum inequality, where one gender experiences the poorest outcomes in all measured dimensions.

II values are calculated using the association-sensitive inequality measure proposed by Seth (2009). This approach relies on the general mean of general means of varying orders. Initially, a geometric mean is used to aggregate values across dimensions separately for women and men. These dimension-specific means are then combined across genders using a harmonic mean.

The dimensions and indicator for each are the following:

- 1. Health:**
 - a. Maternal mortality ratio
 - b. Adolescent birth rate
- 2. Empowerment:**
 - a. Female and male population with at least secondary education
 - b. Female and male shares of parliamentary seats
- 3. Labor Market:**
 - a. Female and Male labor force participations rates

The table 2 shows the Gender Inequality Index as of 2022.

Table 2: Gender Inequality Index³

		Gender Inequality Index		Maternal Mortality Ratio	Adolescent birth rate	Share of Seats in parliament	Population with at least some secondary education (% ages 25 and older)		Labor Force participation rate (% ages 15 and older)	
HDI Rank	Country	Value	Rank	(deaths per 100,000 live births)	(births per 1,000 women ages 15-19)	(% held by women)	Female	Male	Female	Male
107	Vietnam	0.378	91	124	35	30.3%	61.5%	69.5%	68.5%	77.8%
112	Indonesia	0.439	109	173	32.9	21.9%	51%	58.2%	52.5%	81.5%
113	Philippines	0.388	92	78	48.1	27.5%	74.4%	69.9%	44.1%	68.8%
66	Thailand	0.310	74	29	31.6	14%	49.3%	53%	59.9%	76%

Philippines Assessment:

The Philippines is an archipelago in Southeast Asia, consisting of over 7,600 islands, known for its rich cultural heritage, vibrant biodiversity, and strategic geographic location. As one of the region's fastest-growing economies, the country thrives on sectors like agriculture, services, and manufacturing, while also being a major source of overseas labor. With a population of over 110 million, it boasts a young, dynamic workforce and a strong emphasis on education. Despite its economic potential, the

³ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

Philippines faces challenges such as poverty, climate vulnerability, and regional disparities, which shape its development trajectory.

Country Statistics:

Philippines 		
Population	113.9m ⁴	
Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)	49.7 ⁵	
Gender Inequality Index	0.388 ⁶	
Gender Inequality Rank	92	
Maternal Mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	78 ⁷	
Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women below 19)	48.1 ⁸	
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	18 ⁹	
	Female	Male
Adult literacy rate	97.1%	96.8%
Labour force participation	44.1%	68.8%
Political participation rate (% women holding share of seats in parliament)	27.5%	73% ¹⁰
Life Expectancy	71 yrs	67 yrs ¹¹

- **Social Status:** The percentage of Filipino living below income poverty line (USD 1,90 a day) is 8.3%. The Philippines is one of the most advanced Asian countries regarding gender equality international conventions ratifications. The Philippines signed the CEDAW (Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) back in 1980 and ratified it in 1981; the first ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) country to do so.
- **Health:** The maternal mortality ratio (MMR) of 78 per 100,000 live births in the Philippines demonstrates progress in maternal health over the years. However, significant challenges remain, particularly in rural and remote areas. Malnutrition among pregnant women continues to be a critical issue, with deficiencies in iron and other nutrients increasing the risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Limited access to healthcare services further exacerbates the problem, as rural regions often lack adequate facilities, skilled health

⁴ World Bank (2021)

⁵ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard*. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://www.genderindex.org>

⁶ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁷ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁸ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁹ World Bank (2022)

¹⁰ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

¹¹ Statista (2021)

professionals, and emergency obstetric care. Financial constraints and cultural norms also prevent many women, especially in marginalized communities, from seeking timely prenatal and postnatal care. These disparities highlight the need for targeted interventions, such as improving healthcare infrastructure in rural areas, increasing the availability of skilled birth attendants, and expanding health insurance coverage for low-income families. Community-based nutrition programs are also essential to address malnutrition among expectant mothers. Continued efforts to enhance maternal health services and reduce inequalities will be crucial for the Philippines to achieve its maternal health targets under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **Education:** Female literacy in the Philippines is remarkably high, standing at 97.1%, reflecting the country's strong emphasis on education for women. Additionally, 76.6% of adult women have attained at least a secondary level of education, surpassing the 72.4% of men, highlighting a gender advantage in educational attainment. This progress demonstrates the Philippines' success in promoting gender equality in access to education.
- **Economic Participation:** The female labor force participation rate is 44.1%, close to the global average of 48%. Typically, women are responsible for reproductive, productive, and community work, while men predominantly handle productive and community tasks. Reproductive work, which includes caregiving responsibilities, is often undervalued because it is typically unpaid. This perception stems from gender norms that view caregiving as a natural inclination of women, driven by expectations of love and affection, rather than recognizing it as essential work crucial for societal functioning. The gender wage gap is between 23% and 30%, demonstrative of the high level of gender inequality in the labor market. The following figure indicate the employment rate by women and men for the period of 2000 to 2012

Employment Indicator	Philippines		
	Women	Men	Gap
Labor force participation rate			
2000	47.7%; 11.605 million	79.6%; 19.307 million	31.9%
2001	51.8%; 12.711 million	82.4%; 20.098 million	30.6%
2012	50.0%; 15.815 million	78.5%; 24.617 million	28.5%
Employment rate			
2000	42.1%; 10.259 million	70.9%; 17.913 million	28.8%
2012	46.7%; 14.757 million	72.9%; 22.850 million	26.2%
Vulnerable employment			
2001	48.6%; 5.946 million	43.0%; 7.707 million	5.6%
2004	46.3%; 5.551 million	40.6%; 7.988 million	5.7%
2011	44.5%; 6.503 million	39.0%; 8.797 million	5.5%
Low-wage work			
2004	17.6%	13.1%	4.5%
2009	18.6%	12.5%	6.1%
2010	18.2%	12.1%	6.1%
2011	17.7%	11.8%	5.9%

Figure 1 - Employment Indicator Philippines¹²

- The data also reflects some notable improvements for women in the Philippine labor market over time, despite persistent gender gaps. Women's labor force participation increased from 47.7% in 2000 to 50.0% in 2012, alongside a rise in the number of employed women from

¹² Asian Development Bank. (2013). *Gender equality in the labor market in the Philippines*. Asian Development Bank. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/31194/gender-equality-labor-market-philippines.pdf>

10.259 million in 2000 to 14.757 million in 2012. Additionally, the rate of vulnerable employment among women declined from 48.6% in 2001 to 44.5% in 2011, indicating progress in reducing women's reliance on precarious work. Similarly, the proportion of women in low-wage work showed slight stabilization, with only marginal fluctuations over the years. These improvements suggest that while challenges remain, efforts to enhance women's participation and security in the workforce have yielded positive outcomes, though further efforts are needed to close existing gaps.

The Table below highlights the share of employment per sector per gender in Philippines as of 2022:

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Sector of Employment	Share of Total Employment		Total Share of employment
	% Women	% Men	
Agriculture	14.5%	29.5%	23.7%
Services	77%	45.1%	57.4%
Industry	8.5%	25.4%	18.9%

- Women are heavily concentrated in the **services sector**, comprising 77% of female employment compared to 45.1% for men, which accounts for the majority of total employment (57.4%). In contrast, men dominate the **agriculture sector** (29.5% compared to 14.5% for women), and the **industry sector** (25.4% for men versus 8.5% for women). Overall, the industry sector constitutes only 18.9% of total employment, reflecting a gender gap and a lower representation of women in this field. This data underscores the gendered nature of employment distribution, with women primarily engaged in services and underrepresented in agriculture and industry.
- **Political Participation:** The Philippines has made significant progress in women's political participation, with women becoming increasingly prominent as leaders and decision-makers. The country has had two women presidents and one female vice-president. In the 2010 elections, two women were re-elected as senators, and the number of women in the House of Representatives grew from 21 in 1995 to 45 in 2007. At the local level, there has been a steady rise in the number of women elected to city and municipal governments, particularly in roles such as governors, vice mayors, and councillors. Women in the Philippines have the right to vote and run for public office, actively participating in political activism and voting. However, women's representation in Parliament remains limited, comprising 27% of all legislators. Historical gender biases contribute to discrimination against women, restricting their political and societal participation. Barriers such as limited access to education, training opportunities, and family responsibilities further hinder their involvement in politics and other spheres.

Agriculture Sector and Gender in Philippines:

- Agriculture is a major source of employment for women in the Philippines and is recognized as a key sector for development and export, with food security being a critical priority. However, despite ongoing agrarian reform, women own less land than men, are disadvantaged by inheritance laws and land titling systems, and face challenges in purchasing land. Women

¹³ World Bank. (n.d.). *Employment in industry (% of total employment)*. Gender Data Portal. Retrieved from <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/indicator/sl-empl-zs?employmentSector=Industry>

are more often responsible for subsistence farming and have limited access to cash crops and the associated income. Additionally, they receive less agricultural extension training and credit compared to men. Addressing these gender-specific constraints in agriculture, along with expanding opportunities for women in paid roles such as processing and value-added production, could significantly enhance their economic empowerment.

- Women in the Philippines face limited economic opportunities for wage employment in agriculture. Only 6% of women's total employment is in roles such as farmers, forestry workers, and fishers, compared to 22% for men. Large plantations typically prefer hiring men, while women and children often provide unpaid labor to support the men's paid work (FAO, 2006).. Furthermore, the promotion of diversified cropping systems and cash crops for export has, in some cases, further marginalized women. Since women are less likely to receive agricultural extension services, they are often excluded from participating in these new cropping systems at the same level as men.¹⁴
- Climate change has impacted widely agriculture in the Philippines. Between 2006 and 2013, more than 6 million hectares of crops were damaged by 78 such events, at a cost of US\$3.8 billion (UNDP 2019). Climate change has also further emphasized the underlying social and gender inequalities that adversely affect marginalized communities, especially rural women. Persistent gender norms hinder effective gender integration. The contribution of women in farming are often seen as an extension of their domestic tasks and often are not paid for their work. Interviewees said women's contributions to rice farming or fisheries are often regarded as an extension of their domestic tasks and thus rendered invisible. In the Philippines, women earned, on average, 6–8 percentage points lower wages than men from 2012 to 2016 (Briones 2018). Due to predefined gender role, women have limited opportunities to participate in training and decision making. Many of them are obstructed from participating in more technical work such as irrigation systems.

Impact of Climate Change on Gender:

Climate change represents one of today's most critical and widespread developmental and environmental challenges. As an archipelagic nation with a population exceeding 100 million, the Philippines confronts heightened risks from increasingly intense tropical cyclones, significant shifts in rainfall patterns, rising sea levels, and escalating temperatures. These factors pose serious impacts on natural ecosystems, which in turn affect food security, water resources, human health, public infrastructure, energy systems, and human settlements.

Women in the Philippines are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to their roles in agriculture, fisheries, and natural resource management. They are responsible for securing food, water, and fuel, making them more susceptible to climate-induced disasters such as typhoons and droughts. According to the Asian Development Bank, women in the Philippines face increased workloads and health risks due to climate change. Limited access to resources, technology, and decision-making processes further exacerbates these vulnerabilities. Women in coastal areas are especially affected, as climate change impacts fisheries and marine resources they depend on for their livelihoods.

In the Philippines, severe weather events affect different households in distinct ways. Research has shown that female-headed households are more vulnerable to flooding and other storm-related impacts. Climate change-induced food insecurity disproportionately affects women and girls, with

¹⁴ Asian Development Bank. (2013). Gender equality in the labor market in the Philippines. Asian Development Bank. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/31194/gender-equality-labor-market-philippines.pdf>

reports indicating increased infant mortality among girls after typhoons, Research also highlights that as of 2010, only 11% of land in the Philippines was managed by women. Limited access to land ownership or management increases women's vulnerability to climate shocks, whereas those with land access are better positioned to adapt to climate change impact.

Thailand Assessment:

Thailand, home to over 70 million people, is a key player in Southeast Asia with a dynamic economy driven by manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism. Agriculture remains a cornerstone, employing a significant portion of the population and making Thailand the world's second-largest exporter of rice, along with other key commodities like rubber and cassava. While the economy has experienced steady growth, challenges such as income inequality, reliance on exports, and vulnerabilities to global market fluctuations and climate change remain areas of focus for sustainable development.

Country Statistics:

Thailand 		
Population	71.6 ¹⁵	
Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)	32.6 ¹⁶	
Gender Inequality Index	0.310 ¹⁷	
Gender Inequality Index Rank	74	
Maternal Mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	29 ¹⁸	
Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women below 19)	31.6 ¹⁹	
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	7 ²⁰	
	Female	Male
Adult literacy rate	92.4%	95.2% ²¹
Labour force participation	59.9%	76% ²²
Political participation rate (% women holding share of seats in parliament)	14%	86% ²³
Life Expectancy	83	75 ²⁴

- **Social Status:** Thailand ranks 74th on the Gender Inequality Index (GII), with a score of 0.310, reflecting moderate levels of gender disparity compared to other countries. While Thailand

¹⁵ World Bank (2021)

¹⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard*. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://www.genderindex.org>

¹⁷ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

¹⁸ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

¹⁹ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

²⁰ World Bank (2022)

²¹ UNESCO (2018)

²² United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

²³ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

²⁴ Statista (2021)

has made significant strides in areas such as education and healthcare for women, challenges persist in political representation, economic participation, and social norms. Women face barriers in accessing leadership roles and decision-making positions, both in the public and private sectors. Additionally, traditional gender roles often place a disproportionate burden of unpaid domestic and caregiving work on women, limiting their opportunities for professional and economic advancement. Despite these challenges, Thailand's relatively high rank signals ongoing efforts to reduce gender inequalities, though further policy measures are needed to achieve full gender equity.

- **Health:** Thailand has made commendable progress in healthcare, as reflected by its low maternal mortality rate of 29 per 100,000 live births, which is among the lowest in Southeast Asia. This achievement is largely attributed to a robust healthcare system that includes universal health coverage (UHC) and widespread access to antenatal care and skilled birth attendants in urban areas. However, significant healthcare disparities persist, particularly in rural and remote regions. In rural areas, challenges include limited healthcare infrastructure, shortages of skilled professionals, and geographical barriers that hinder timely access to maternal and child healthcare services. Women in these regions are less likely to receive adequate prenatal care or emergency obstetric services, increasing the risk of complications during childbirth. Additionally, cultural and financial barriers further restrict rural women's ability to seek healthcare, despite UHC. The gap in healthcare quality between urban and rural areas also extends to education on maternal health and access to family planning resources, contributing to higher rates of teenage pregnancies and complications in rural populations.
- **Education:** Thai women generally benefit from good education and possess solid basic ICT skills relative to men. They actively engage in productive activities, yet opportunities for advancement require enhanced recognition and support. The adult literacy rate of women is of 92.4%. In education, Thailand has achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education. However, women are underrepresented in STEM fields, comprising only 24% of graduates in these disciplines.
- **Economic Participation:** Thailand has made significant strides in gender equality but still faces substantial challenges. Women constitute about 59% of the workforce but are often concentrated in lower-paying, informal sectors and face a wage gap of approximately 16%.

The Table below highlights the share of employment per sector per gender in Thailand as of 2022:²⁵

Sector of Employment	Share of Total Employment		Total Share of employment
	% Women	% Men	
Agriculture	27%	33.3%	47.3%
Services	53.9%	41.7%	57.4%
Industry	19.1%	24.9%	22.2%

- Agriculture accounts for 47.3% of total employment, with men having a slightly higher share (33.3%) compared to women (27%), indicating men's dominance in this sector. The services sector is the largest, representing 57.4% of total employment, where women hold a majority

²⁵ World Bank. (n.d.). *Employment in industry (% of total employment)*. Gender Data Portal. Retrieved from <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/indicator/sl-empl-zs?employmentSector=Industry>

share (53.9%) compared to men (41.7%), reflecting women's strong presence in service-oriented roles. In contrast, the industry sector has the smallest share at 22.2%, with men (24.9%) outnumbering women (19.1%), showing women's underrepresentation in industrial jobs. This distribution demonstrates a gendered division of labor, with women concentrated in services and less represented in agriculture and industry.

- **Political Participation:** Women representation in the parliament remains low with 14% of seats. Women in Thailand are significantly underrepresented in decision-making in public sectors. Only 1.32% of provincial governors are women, with women heading just 8% of Provincial Administrative Organizations (PAO) and 6.45% of Sub-district Administrative Organizations. These figures place Thailand among the lowest in Asia and the Pacific for gender equality in politics.
- **Policy and Initiatives:** The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) in Thailand is tasked with ensuring food security and incorporates gender equality as a guiding principle in its 20-year agriculture and cooperative plan (2017-2036). In the Department of Agriculture Action Plan (2023-2027) it includes efforts to strengthen women's groups, register farmer's wives and transfer agricultural knowledge to women. Thailand's NDCs, which outline the country's commitments to climate change mitigation and adaptation, include references to gender considerations. The NDC acknowledges the need for gender-responsive approaches in climate action, particularly in adaptation strategies

Agriculture Sector and Gender in Thailand:

- Out of the 12.7 million in the workforce in Thailand, 67% of them are working in agriculture. 47% of farm workers in Thailand are women. According to the World Bank (2020), the share of women's employment in agriculture in Thailand decreased significantly from 60.8% in 1991 to 27% in 2020. Despite this decline, Thai women play an active role in agricultural groups. 27% of women in Thailand own agricultural land which is higher than the average of 18% for OECD member countries.
- Traditionally, men held dominant roles in agricultural work in Thailand. However, economic changes and the need for cash have compelled women to assume greater responsibilities in agriculture. Today, women typically manage a significant portion of financial and household tasks related to farming, while men often work in the fields and seek income outside the village. Women also contribute to household income through both on-farm and off-farm income-generating activities. Consequently, women have increasingly taken on decision-making roles alongside their husbands.
- Despite these shifts, the gender-based division of labour and societal norms continue to influence family and community dynamics. Women's lower social status and limited representation in leadership positions mean that financial management responsibilities often become burdensome rather than empowering, restricting their power and autonomy. There are three groups of women farm workers: unpaid family workers which makes up 80%, employers of land-owning family who inherited land and employees of the department of Agriculture or private employers. Women working hours in the field tend to be much more than men and are often less paid than men as seen in the graph below.

- While men and women may both participate in farming, women often take on additional backyard farming activities as part of unpaid family work. However, farming households are typically recorded based on men's activities, as women are often viewed as "assistants" rather than primary contributors. This invisibility leads to gaps in policy and program interventions that fail to address women's farming needs. As a result, initiatives like agricultural trade expansion may not adequately benefit unpaid women workers, leaving them more vulnerable than men in the agricultural sector.

Monthly earnings in Thai Baht, formal and informal employment, 2020

● Agriculture ● Manufacturing ● Trade and service

Formal

Male Total: 15,496

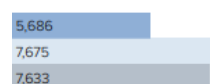


Female Total: 15,509



Informal

Male Total: 6,924



Female Total: 5,946



*Source: Informal Employment Survey from 2020

- In the past years, we have seen an increase of training for women for the use of technology to increase food production. However, in the low-income rural area, the doors to those opportunity remain difficult.

Impact of Climate Change on Gender

Climate change disproportionately affects women in Thailand, especially in rural areas where they depend heavily on natural resources. Women are primary caregivers and are responsible for securing food, water, and fuel for their families. Climate-induced disasters such as floods and droughts exacerbate these responsibilities, increasing their workload and health risks. A study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) found that women in Thailand spend significantly more time than men on unpaid care work, which increases during climate-related emergencies. Women farmers, who constitute a large part of the agricultural workforce, face challenges due to erratic weather patterns, which impact crop yields and food security.

Indonesia Assessment:

Indonesia, the largest archipelago in the world, is located in Southeast Asia and is home to over 270 million people, making it the fourth most populous country globally. Known for its rich cultural diversity, Indonesia encompasses over 17,000 islands and more than 300 ethnic groups, with a dynamic blend of traditions and languages. As Southeast Asia's largest economy, Indonesia has a thriving economy driven by natural resources, agriculture, manufacturing, and a growing digital economy. Its strategic location and abundant biodiversity make it a key player in regional and global trade. However, challenges such as income inequality, environmental sustainability, and infrastructure development remain critical to its progress.

Country Statistics:

Indonesia 		
Population	273.8m ²⁶	
Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)	44.6 ²⁷	
Gender Inequality Index	0.439 ²⁸	
Gender Inequality Index Rank	109 ²⁹	
Maternal Mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	173 ³⁰	
Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women below 19)	32.9 ³¹	
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	17 ³²	
	Female	Male
Adult literacy rate	94.55%	97.45% ³³
Labour force participation	52.5%	81.5% ³⁴
Political participation rate (% women holding share of seats in parliament)	27.5%	72.5% ³⁵
Life Expectancy	70 yrs	66 yrs ³⁶

²⁶ World Bank (2021)

²⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard*. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://www.genderindex.org>

²⁸ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

²⁹ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

³⁰ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

³¹ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

³² World Bank (2021)

³³ Statista (2020)

³⁴ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

³⁵ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

³⁶ Statista 2021

- **Social Status:** Indonesia has made progress in gender equality but continues to face significant challenges. The country ranks 109th on the **Gender Inequality Index (GII)**, with a score of **0.439**, reflecting persistent disparities in areas such as healthcare, education, and economic participation. While strides have been made in improving access to education for women and promoting gender-sensitive policies, barriers remain in political representation, workforce inclusion, and equal access to resources. Cultural norms and regional inequalities further hinder progress, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address these gaps and promote greater gender equity.
- **Health:** Maternal mortality remains a pressing issue in Indonesia, with a rate of 173 deaths per 100,000 live births, highlighting significant challenges in ensuring safe maternal healthcare. Malnutrition compounds this issue, disproportionately affecting women and children, leading to increased risks of pregnancy complications, low birth weights, and developmental issues among children. The unequal distribution of healthcare services exacerbates these problems, as rural and remote areas often lack access to skilled birth attendants, emergency obstetric care, and adequate nutrition programs. The disparities between urban and rural areas are particularly stark. Urban regions generally have better healthcare infrastructure, higher availability of skilled professionals, and improved access to maternal and child health services. Conversely, rural areas face limited healthcare facilities, transportation barriers, and cultural norms that can delay or discourage women from seeking care.
- **Education:** Before 1900, women in Indonesia had significantly fewer opportunities for self-development compared to men, particularly in education, as they were generally not permitted to attend school. However, following independence and the establishment of various constitutions, legislations, and policies guaranteeing the right to education for every citizen, women's access to education began to improve. Since the 1970s, additional policies have been implemented to eliminate barriers to education. These efforts have yielded positive results, with an increased number of women seeking education. The female labour force participation rate is 52.5%, with women often working in informal sectors with lower pay and job security. The literacy rate for women is 94.55%, yet disparities remain in higher education and professional fields.
- **Economic Representation:** Labor force participation in Indonesia has seen significant changes over the years, reflecting broader socio-economic shifts within the country. Recent decades have seen a gradual increase in women's participation, driven by improved access to education and evolving societal norms. The women labour force participation is of 52.5%. Despite this progress, women continue to face challenges such as lower wages, limited opportunities in certain sectors, and the burden of unpaid care work. According to the 2014 Global Gender Gap Report, although the female unemployment rate decreased from 9% in 2012 to 6.8%, it remains higher than the male unemployment rate of 5.8%. Women make up only about 33% of the workforce in non-agricultural sectors, with the majority concentrated in the informal economy—twice the proportion of men.³⁷ Many of these women are in low-paying jobs or work unpaid in small family businesses. On average, women received lower wages compared to men. The average wage for women was IDR 1.4 million, while men earned an average of IDR 1.7 million.

³⁷ Asian Development Bank. (2015). *Women and work in Indonesia*. Asian Development Bank. Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/177025/ino-paper-06-2015.pdf>

The Table below highlights the share of employment per sector per gender in Indonesia as of 2022: ³⁸

Sector of Employment	Share of Total Employment		Total Share of employment
	% Women	% Men	
Agriculture	26.6%	31.1%	26.5%
Services	57.1%	43.5%	57.1%
Industry	16.3%	25.5%	16.3%

- The agriculture sector accounts for 26.5% of total employment, with men holding a slightly higher share (31.1%) compared to women (26.6%). The services sector dominates the employment landscape, making up 57.1% of total employment, where women represent a larger share (57.1%) compared to men (43.5%), reflecting a significant concentration of women in service-oriented roles. Conversely, the industry sector constitutes only 16.3% of total employment, with men (25.5%) outnumbering women (16.3%), indicating underrepresentation of women in industrial jobs. This distribution underscores the gendered division of labor, with women primarily engaged in services and underrepresented in both agriculture and industry, highlighting potential disparities in access to diverse employment opportunities.
- **Political Representation:** Women have the same rights as men to hold political and public office, with no formal barriers to their political participation. Despite this, the political arena has traditionally been male dominated. To address this gender gap and promote women's political participation, the Government of Indonesia enacted Law No. 10/2008. This law mandates that political parties include a minimum of 30 percent women candidates and requires that at least one woman be among the top three ranked candidates. Although there is this law in place, there are no specific sanctions for non-compliance. 27.5% of women hold a seat in the parliament.
- **Access to Financing:** Access to finance for women in Indonesia remains a challenge, despite progress through financial inclusion initiatives. Many women, particularly in rural areas, face barriers such as lack of collateral, lower financial literacy, and concentration in informal employment, which limits their ability to access formal credit and loans. Traditional gender norms and biases within financial institutions also contribute to these difficulties, often perceiving women as higher-risk borrowers. However, efforts such as the government's "People's Business Credit" (KUR) program, microfinance initiatives, and the rise of fintech solutions have started to bridge the gap by providing small loans and financial services through accessible platforms. Indonesia's National Financial Inclusion Strategy (SNKI) also emphasizes gender equality, aiming to empower women and improve their access to financial resources. Despite these advancements, targeted efforts to enhance financial literacy, address systemic barriers, and promote women's economic independence are essential to achieve full financial inclusion for women in Indonesia.
- **Policies and Initiatives:**
 - **Village Law No. 6/2014:** This law explicitly emphasizes the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality in rural development. It serves as a foundation for various policies and programs aimed at bridging the gap between urban and rural

³⁸ World Bank. (n.d.). *Employment in industry (% of total employment)*. Gender Data Portal. Retrieved from <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/indicator/sl-empl-zs?employmentSector=Industry>

areas, ensuring that women have equitable access to resources and opportunities in the agricultural sector

- **Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000 on Gender Mainstreaming:** This directive mandates all government agencies to incorporate gender perspectives into their planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes. In the agricultural sector, this has led to the development of gender-responsive programs and budgets, ensuring that women's needs and contributions are recognized and addressed.
- Indonesia has outlined its commitment to gender equality in agriculture through its **National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020–2024**. This strategic plan emphasizes increasing women's access to agricultural resources, technology, and markets, and promoting their involvement in decision-making processes at all levels. While the RPJMN focuses on the 2020–2024 period, it aligns with Indonesia's broader development goals leading up to 2030, particularly in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 5 on gender equality.
- Indonesia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement highlight the importance of gender-responsive approaches in climate action, which encompasses sustainable agricultural practices. The NDCs recognize that addressing gender disparities is crucial for effective climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, aiming for significant progress by 2030.

Agriculture Sector and Gender in Indonesia:

- 40% of employment from men and women are in agriculture in Indonesia. 26.6% of employed women are working in Agriculture. In 2019, agricultural products in Indonesia made up 19.2% of its exports value (Mizik 2021). According to the 2018 Agriculture Census, women farmers make up roughly 49% of farming households in Indonesia. Traditionally, men have held dominant roles in agricultural work, managing large-scale farming activities and decision-making processes. Women, on the other hand, have often been relegated to roles perceived as secondary, such as subsistence farming, household chores, and unpaid labour. Despite women's involvement in farming activities, women's work is often undervalued. With the strong climate change impact including the shift in wet and dry season pattern, there is a strong pressure on women's food insecurity and risk of poverty. In interviews with farmers in Indonesia, it has been reported that women are usually the first one to get laid off from agriculture business in the event of floods or droughts.
- Similarly to other countries in Southeast Asia, persistent cultural and gender norms limit women's access to knowledge. Women are unable to participate in training programs and attend relevant meetings. Women access to government-sponsored trainings on technology adoption are often not limited. For instance, trainings on climate-smart agriculture, technical equipment training are often targeted to men only. This results in lower capacity-building opportunities for women and a lack of explicit intention to incorporate women into the technical trainings.
- Furthermore, women have limited access to land which restrict their decision-making power pertaining to agricultural land (Kieran et al. 2015). For example, stakeholders mentioned that women are typically excluded from discussions about whether to sell off land to be converted to oil palm plantations.

Impact of Climate Change on Gender

In Indonesia, women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to their roles in agriculture and natural resource management. Women are responsible for securing food, water, and fuel for their families, making them more susceptible to the impacts of droughts, floods, and rising sea

levels. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), women in Indonesia's agricultural sector face increased workloads and health risks due to climate change. Limited access to resources, technology, and decision-making processes exacerbates these vulnerabilities. Women in coastal communities are particularly affected by rising sea levels and decreasing fish stocks, which impact their livelihoods and food security.

Vietnam Assessment:

Vietnam, located in Southeast Asia, is a rapidly developing country known for its dynamic economy, rich cultural heritage, and strong agricultural foundation. With a population of over 98 million, Vietnam has transitioned from a predominantly agrarian society to a major hub for manufacturing, trade, and tourism. Agriculture remains a vital sector, employing a significant portion of the population and contributing to exports like rice, coffee, and seafood, making Vietnam one of the world's top rice exporters. While the country has made remarkable progress in poverty reduction and infrastructure development, challenges such as environmental sustainability, urban-rural disparities, and gender equality continue to influence its growth trajectory.

Country Statistics:

Vietnam 		
Population	97.47 ³⁹	
Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)	24.5 ⁴⁰	
Gender Inequality Index	0.378 ⁴¹	
Gender Inequality Index Ranking	91 ⁴²	
Maternal Mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	124 ⁴³	
Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women below 19)	35 ⁴⁴	
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	16 ⁴⁵	
	Female	Male
Adult literacy rate	94.57%	96.99%
Labour force participation	68.5%	77.8% ⁴⁶
Political participation rate (% women holding share of seats in parliament)	30%	70% ⁴⁷
Life Expectancy	78 yrs	69 yrs

³⁹ World Bank 2021

⁴⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard*. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://www.genderindex.org>

⁴¹ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁴² United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁴³ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁴⁴ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁴⁵ World Bank

⁴⁶ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

⁴⁷ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). *Gender Inequality Index (GII)*. Human Development Reports. Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

- **Social Status:** Vietnam has made significant progress in advancing gender equality, reflected in its ranking of 87th on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) with a score of 0.378. This progress is evident in areas such as women's high literacy rates, increasing representation in the labor force, and improved access to healthcare and education. Vietnam has also seen a rise in women holding leadership roles in government and business, supported by policies like the National Strategy on Gender Equality (2021–2030), which aims to reduce gender gaps in economic, political, and social spheres. However, challenges remain, particularly in rural areas where traditional gender roles persist, limiting women's participation in decision-making and economic opportunities. Women are often concentrated in low-paying jobs, with a significant proportion engaged in informal and unpaid labor, such as farming and caregiving, which are undervalued and unprotected by labor laws. Gender-based violence and limited access to credit, land ownership, and professional training further hinder women's empowerment, especially in underserved communities.
- The 1996 Constitution and related laws guarantee equal rights for women and men in areas such as economic opportunities, marriage and family matters, political participation, public administration, and property ownership, including land.
- **Health:** Healthcare access in Vietnam has improved significantly, thanks to the expansion of health insurance and investments in healthcare infrastructure. However, challenges remain, particularly in maternal and reproductive health services. The **maternal mortality rate (MMR)** stands at **124 per 100,000 live births**, highlighting the need for further improvements in antenatal care, skilled birth attendance, and emergency obstetric services, especially in rural and remote areas. Access to reproductive health services is uneven, with urban areas generally benefiting from better facilities and trained professionals, while rural and ethnic minority communities face barriers such as limited infrastructure, financial constraints, and cultural norms that discourage seeking medical care. Adolescents and young women often have inadequate access to sexual and reproductive health education, increasing risks of early pregnancies and related complications.
- **Education:** Women's labor force participation in Vietnam is notably high at 68.5%, showcasing their significant contribution to the economy. However, many women are employed in lower-paying, informal jobs with limited job security and benefits, reflecting persistent structural inequalities. The literacy rate for women stands at 94.57%, indicating substantial progress in educational attainment and the positive impact of increased access to education. This has enabled more women to pursue higher education and vocational training, fostering economic empowerment and skill development. Despite these advancements, gender disparities persist, particularly in higher education fields and leadership positions, where women remain underrepresented. Addressing these gaps through targeted policies and programs can further promote gender equity in both education and employment.
- **Economic Representation:** Vietnam has one of the highest female labour force participation rates in the world, with women constituting about 33.5% of the total workforce. Women who are economically active are heavily concentrated in agriculture, contributing more labor hours than men in activities such as cultivation, livestock breeding, agricultural processing, and marketing of produce. However, their access to extension services remains limited. Since 1993, male employment in farming has declined, while the number of women farmers has steadily increased. Female entrepreneurship is on the rise, with many women starting their own businesses. The government and various NGOs provide support through microfinance and training programs. However, women-led businesses often face challenges such as limited access to credit, markets, and networks compared to their male counterparts.

- In Vietnam, the gender pay gap is still present, women spend a similar amount of time as men on income-generating activities but earn 14% less per month.
- The Table below highlights the share of employment per sector per gender in Vietnam as of 2022:⁴⁸

Sector of Employment	Share of Total Employment		Total Share of employment
	% Women	% Men	
Agriculture	34.9%	32.4%	33.5%
Services	38.6%	32.2%	35.9%
Industry	26.5%	34.4%	30.7%

Overall, the employment distribution highlights a gendered pattern across Vietnam's economy: women are relatively more concentrated in agriculture and services, while men have a substantially higher representation in industry. In the context of the programme, the significant participation of women in agriculture is particularly relevant and reinforces the importance of ensuring that women have equitable access to skills development, technology, financing and economic opportunities arising from investments in the agriculture and food sector

- **Political Representation:** Historically, Vietnam has made efforts to increase female representation in politics. The National Assembly, Vietnam's legislative body, has seen a significant rise in the number of female representatives over the year. Vietnam has 30% of share of women for seats in parliament. However, despite these gains, gender equality in politics still faces obstacles. Cultural and societal norms, combined with traditional gender roles, can influence women's participation in political activities.
- **Policies and Initiatives:**
 - **National Strategy on Gender Equality (2021–2030):** This strategy aims to reduce gender disparities across various sectors, including agriculture. It emphasizes enhancing women's participation in economic activities, improving access to resources, and promoting leadership roles for women in rural development.
 - **Law on Gender Equality (2006):** While not recent, this foundational law continues to influence current policies by mandating equal rights for men and women in all fields, including agriculture. It serves as a basis for subsequent gender-responsive policies and programs.
 - **Policy Brief on Gender-Equitable Consultations (2024):** Published in July 2024, this brief emphasizes the importance of gender-equitable consultations in Vietnam's land and agriculture law and policy. It highlights the need for inclusive policymaking processes that actively involve women, particularly from diverse backgrounds, to ensure their voices are heard and their priorities are reflected in policies and laws.
 - **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs):** In its updated NDC submitted in 2022, Vietnam emphasizes the importance of gender equality in climate action. The document highlights the need to harmonize greenhouse gas emission reductions and climate change adaptation with sustainable development goals, including the promotion of gender equality and the reduction of risks for vulnerable populations.

Agriculture Sector and Gender in Vietnam:

⁴⁸ World Bank, World Development Indicators, based on ILO Modelled Estimates (ILOEST), 2022

- In Vietnam, agriculture plays a vital role in the economy, and women are crucial contributors to this sector. 63% of agriculture workers in Vietnam are female.⁴⁹ They are involved in various aspects of agricultural production, from traditional roles like rice cultivation and livestock management to newer ventures in horticulture and aquaculture.
- Despite their significant contribution to agriculture, women own only about 10-15% of agricultural land in Vietnam. Cultural norms and legal barriers often prevent women from inheriting or owning land independently. This lack of land tenure security hampers their ability to invest in and benefit from agricultural development fully.
- Women in rural areas face multifaceted challenges, including inadequate access to agricultural extension services, financial services, and technology. Limited educational opportunities and traditional gender roles further constrain their ability to engage in decision-making processes and access higher-value agricultural activities. Only about 10-15% of female-headed households have access to credit for agricultural purposes.

Impact of Climate Change on Gender

Viet Nam is also one of the five developing coastal countries most affected by climate change in the world (World Bank 2021). In Vietnam, women are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to their roles in agriculture and natural resource management. They are often responsible for securing water, food, and fuel for their families, making them more susceptible to the effects of droughts, floods, and typhoons. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), women make up a significant portion of the agricultural workforce, yet they have limited access to resources, technology, and decision-making processes. Climate change exacerbates these vulnerabilities, increasing the workload and health risks for women, especially in rural areas. In addition, men often migrate to urban areas for employment, leaving women to manage both childcare and farming responsibilities. Additionally, limited opportunities, mobility constraints, and challenges in accessing information on climate change and its related risks impede their ability to adapt.

⁴⁹ [Female-farmers-and-inclusive-growth-EN.pdf \(unwomen.org\)](https://unwomen.org/publications/female-farmers-and-inclusive-growth-EN.pdf)

Part III) Approach to Gender Barriers

1. **Outcome 1:** Empower women by driving technology adoption and development of new jobs across the value chain of agriculture.
2. **Outcome 2:** Support access of funding to female led and owned businesses in the focus countries
3. **Outcome 3:** Increase participation of women in the agriculture and food industry
4. **Outcome 4:** Reduce gender disparity in skills development and increase accessible training for women and men
5. **Outcome 5:** Promote the enhancement of new policies to address gender inequality in agriculture and food sector

The table below highlights the MCSSEAFP approach to each barrier in the identified targeted countries:

Barriers Identified	Proposed Intervention
Barrier 1: Closing the gender gap that exists in technology adoption and financial resources present in the agriculture sector.	1.1. Ensure high representation of women in the executing entity team 1.2 Ensure access to continuous learning and upskilling for rural communities, particularly women.
Barrier 2: Ensure greater representation and participation of women in the development of climate adaptation strategies across SSEA.	2.1 Support and Gather sex-disaggregated data on gender for portfolio companies. 2.2 Ensure portfolio companies have policies in place to support recruitment and retention of women. 2.3 Ensure portfolio companies have a gender action plan in place. 2.4 Drive positive gender policies, employment practices and female board representation in portfolio companies
Barrier 3: Increase adaptive capacity of women to climate change across SSEA.	3.1 Provide access to climate adaptation technologies that unlock additional opportunities and income. 3.2 Increase access to education and training for women in the agriculture sector. 3.3 Support portfolio companies recruit women in the supply chain

Part IV) Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan

Gender Action Plan

Impact Statement:

To drive integration, responsiveness and participation of women in the South and Southeast Asia agriculture and food ecosystem. This includes support technology adoption for women, support female led and owned businesses, increase representation of women in the development of climate adaptation strategies across the agriculture value chain and increase mandates for gender transformative policies in agriculture.

Outcome Statement:

- 1) Empower women by driving technology adoption and development of new jobs across the value chain of agriculture.
- 2) Support access of funding to female led and owned businesses in the focus countries
- 3) Increase participation of women in the agriculture and food industry
- 4) Reduce gender disparity in skills development and increase accessible training for women including training for adaptation solutions
- 5) Promote the enhancement of new policies to address gender inequality in agriculture and food sector

Output 1: Understand baseline performance of portfolio companies across outcome areas

Output 2: Throughout the programme, partner with portfolio companies to drive employee of women across their organisation, including representation in senior leadership, partner with ecosystem partners working on improving skills and capabilities of women across food and agri.

Output 3: Support increased of capital allocation to female owned/ led businesses.

Activities (Fund Level Activities)	Indicator	Baseline Target	Targets	Timeline	Responsibilities	Cost
1) Support employment of women at Mandala Capital	Percentage of total employees of Mandala Capital should be/or identify as female	30%	40%	To be maintained throughout the life of the Fund	Mandala Capital	NA
2) Integration of gender-lens investing across the investment process	Percentage of female founded businesses in MCSSEAFP To do so: Actively build relationships with female entrepreneurs, business	0%	30% ⁵⁰	At Year10	Mandala Capital	NA

⁵⁰ Defined as a business founded by a women or Share of women ownership > 51% according to the 2X Gender Lens-Investing Criteria

	associations, and organizations that support women in business. Conduct regular reviews to ensure the investment pipeline reflects this commitment.					
Activities (TAF funded)	Indicator	Baseline Target	Targets	Timeline	Responsibilities	Cost
1) Portfolio gender assessments	(i) 1 Initial portfolio gender assessment report completed	0	1 per company	Prior to each investment	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Investment Team)	\$120k ⁵¹
2) Development of Gender Actions Plans for portfolio companies, implementation and evaluation of GAP	Gender Action Plan developed for investee companies	0	1 per company	GAP to be developed within first 3 months of investments and be adopted within the first 6 months.	Mandala Capital to develop the GAP in collaboration with the Portfolio Companies (Impact Consultant full time + Investment Team)	\$375k ⁵²
3) Support increased employment and skills development of women by MCSSEAFP portfolio companies.	Percentage of total employees of MCSSEAFP portfolio companies should be women. This will be measured at a portfolio level.	0	30-50% ⁵³	By Y5 of the programme lifetime	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Investment Team)	NA

⁵¹ Budget referred in Annex 4 – as part of activity 2.1.2: Needs assessment of portfolio and eco-systems gaps, assuming \$10,000 per gender assessment.

⁵² Budget referred in Annex 4 – as part of activity 2.2.3: Support companies to set, implement, and evaluate gender action plans and provide company level gender training: includes Gender & Social Inclusion Expert and Research, Studies and Tools cost

⁵³ Threshold defined by the 2X Gender-Lens Investing Criteria

This will be achieved through increased education and training and ensuring a supportive policy environment at Company level and alignment at Board level	Percentage of women from portfolio companies and/or customers of portfolio companies receive training	0	At least 50%	By Y10 of the programme lifetime	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Third Party Trainer)	\$425k ⁵⁴
	Ensure that each company implements a policy exceeding basic legal standards to strengthen women's recruitment, retention, and overall wellbeing at work.	-	1 Policy per company	To be implemented post portfolio company GAP and to be verified on a yearly basis	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Investment Team)	NA
	Percentage of female representation at the board of directors' levels	TBD	30% ⁵⁵	By Y5 of programme lifetime	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Investment Team)	NA
	Percentage of female in senior management	TBD	30% ⁵⁶	By Y5 of programme lifetime	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Investment Team)	NA
	Ensure that Portfolio Companies are trained on annually SEAH, SEAH policies and procedures, and SEAH investigations that are	0	1 annual training per portfolio company	annually	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Third-Party Trainer)	\$100k ⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Budget referred in Annex 4 – as part of activity 2.2.4 Support activities to promote skills development and leadership representation of women in new climate-tech sectors

⁵⁵ Threshold defined by the 2X Gender-Lens Investing Criteria

⁵⁶ Threshold defined by the 2X Gender-Lens Investing Criteria

⁵⁷ Budget referred in Annex 4 – as part of activity 2.2.3: Support companies to set, implement, and evaluate gender action plans and provide company level gender training

	gender-sensitive and survivor centred.					
	Portfolio company management trained on GBV prevention	TBD	100%	Training within 1 year of investment		
4) Provide technical training on adaptation and climate resilience as well as best ESG practice	Number of low income women gaining technical skills throughout the life of the program	0	700	Y10 of programme	Mandala Capital and Third-Party Trainer	\$440K ⁵⁸
5) Provide Technical assistance for accelerating the deployment of new technologies for female focus	Percentage of females focused R&D / pilots	0	At least 50%	Y10 of programme	Mandala Capital (Investment Team + Impact Consultant full time)	\$640K ⁵⁹
6) Ensure a supportive policy and environment for women	Ensure that all portfolio companies have policies to improve women recruitment, retention.	0	1 per company	Annual	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time)	NA
	Event participation to ensure supportive policy and environment for women	0	1 per year	Annual	Mandala Capital and third-party gender expert	\$400K ⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Budget referred in Annex 4- Activity 2.3.2: Enhance women's participation in agriculture

⁵⁹ Budget referred in Annex 4 – Activity 2.3.1 Support pilots and feasibility studies for the deployment of climate resilience technologies and business models. 50% of pilots and R&D budget will be allocated for female focus project.

⁶⁰ Budget referred in Annex 4 – Activity 2.3.2 Enhance women's participation in agriculture

	Published Success Story on Gender initiatives and inclusivity	0	1 per year	Annual	Mandala Capital and third-party gender expert	\$160K ⁶¹
7) Develop and implement portfolio level GBV Prevention and Response Framework	Percentage of portfolio companies adopting GBV/SEAH Codes of Conduct	TBD	100%	Codes adopted within 3 months of investment.	Mandala Capital (Impact Consultant full time + Investment Team)	NA
	Grievance mechanisms established in portfolio companies	TBD	100%	Mechanism operational within 1 year of investment		

⁶¹ Budget referred in Annex 4 – Activity 2.3.2 Enhance women’s participation in agriculture