



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN SELECTED AQUACULTURE VALUE CHAINS IN CAMBODIA, THAILAND AND VIETNAM

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**WA 2015 JEJU**  
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# Introduction

- Women are involved in various nodes of the aquaculture value chains
- Is participation enough?
- How much involvement?
- Well-being issues
- Recognition
- Documentation
  
- Scope/limitation of the case studies
  - Growout phase
  - Area specific
  - Species specific
  - Project duration and resources

# Objectives of case studies

- To **map the gender roles** in the selected aquaculture value chain
- To **identify and analyse the roles and activities** of women and men in the grow-out stage of aquaculture
- To **analyze the gender dimensions** with respect to division of labour, decision making process, benefit sharing and access to resources (including knowledge and information).
- To **identify the gender issues, needs and opportunities**

# Case Study Locations & Partners



**Department of Fisheries**

- Tilapia cages
- Small-scale marine shrimp

**Fisheries Administration**  
- Freshwater aquaculture

**Cantho University**  
- Red tilapia cages  
- Rice-shrimp rotation

# Methodology

1. Primary data – farmer and household surveys, women in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, key informant interviews
2. Secondary data - local language documents, published papers, reports, government records
3. Respondents:
  - surveys at least 30 farmers/households per system, unequal ♀:♂ in some
  - in-depth interviews with 6 women per system (their activities, roles, relations; assets, capabilities; power and decision making; needs, priorities and aspirations)
4. Questionnaires (qualitative and quantitative)
5. Descriptive analysis

# Cambodia: SS Freshwater Aquaculture

- A family activity; all members engage in various aquaculture related work
- Also hire temporary external labor (men for construction, women for harvest)
- Both males and females involved but women had more inputs than men in terms of labor/time
- Migration of the men for alternative occupation outside hometown
- Aquaculture is secondary to rice farming
- Other activities: livestock, labor, local officer, offices

# Cambodia: SS Freshwater Aquaculture

## Issues on roles

**Wages:** men (US\$1-3/day); women (US\$0.5-2/day)

- Reasons: Men given heavier workload, Social system to pay more

**Workload:** defined but women are left to operate when men go to migrate for more income – pressure on women but they can do it

**Decisions:** Technical by men as they are more trained. Financial more women due to marketing and trading skills.

**Training:** limited for women (though invited could not attend)

# Cambodia: SS Freshwater Aquaculture

## **Issues faced by women farmers – Lack or inadequate:**

- technical knowledge and experience in aquaculture
- financial assistance and technical support
- market to sell their fish with better price
- support to mitigate or protect the culture from the impact of environmental and climate change issues, i.e. drought, flood and diseases

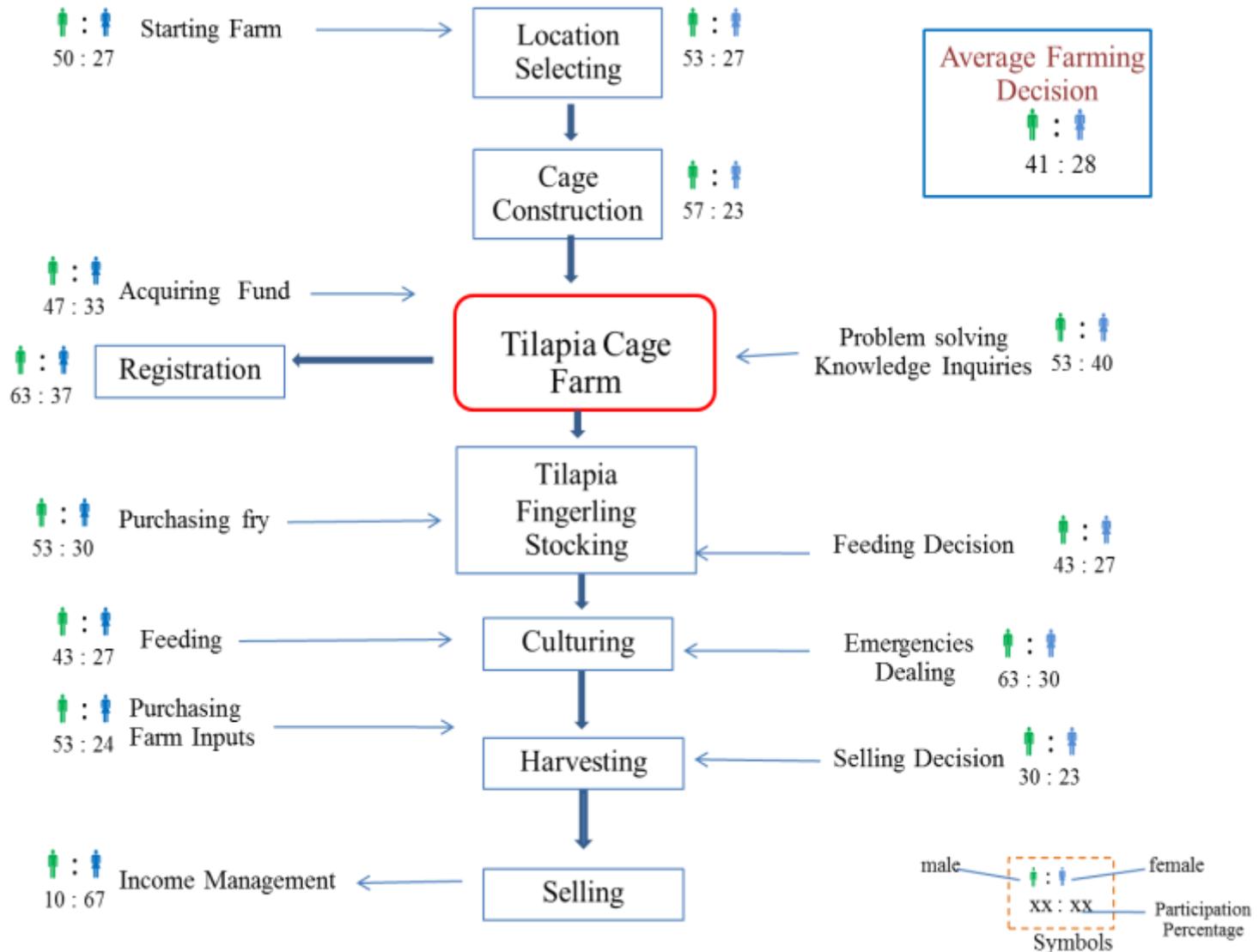
## **Opportunity:**

Small scale aquaculture – link with food security and nutrition security but need to address the issues above to empower women (E.g. Mrs Ngim)

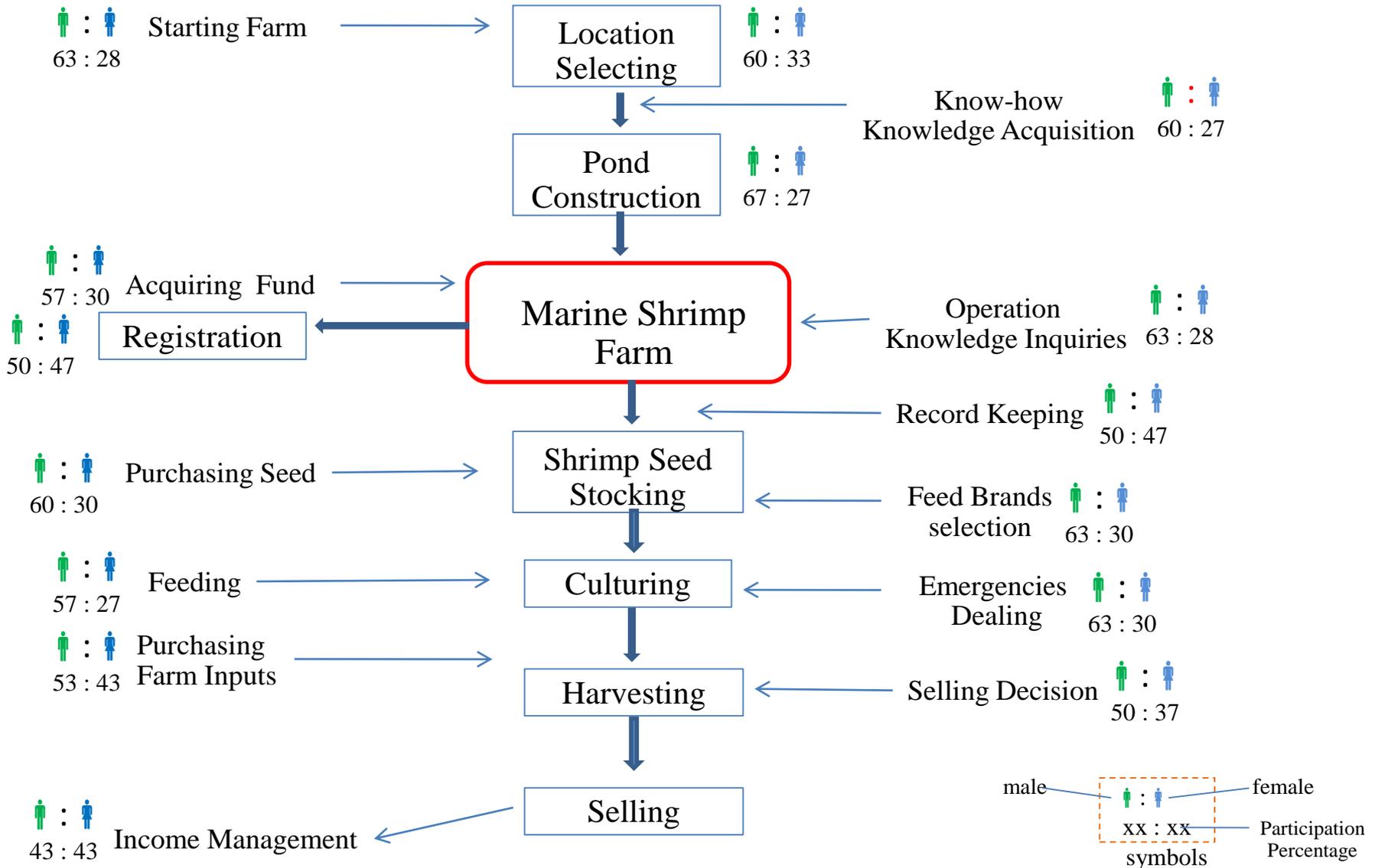


- Ms. Chheung Ngim, 54 (a housewife and fish farmer)
  - Mr. Ken Heng, 56 (a rice and fish farmer)
  - 4 Children, 2 young grandchildren
- Trained in seed production and growout
- Successfully expanded farm and equipment
- Now training others and become an example of success
- Success in farming benefited family, community, herself

# Thailand: Tilapia cages



# Thailand: SS Marine Shrimp



# Thailand : Tilapia and Shrimp

Tilapia	Shrimp
Farmers' wives who also work in the farms have other economic activities – selling fish, grocery, rice, rubber (considered more important sources of income)	Female farmers have other work at home, or trading, hired labor, other income generating activities,
Women's involvement limited due to other chores, but they still want to participate	Although limited, but women can still work in the shrimp farms with their husbands: feeding, record keeping, checking stock
Tilapia farming added income for family, keep family together as men do not migrate but operate cages	Men and women co-own the farms but more men take main responsibility, esp they have more knowhow
Women manage the financial aspect especially income disposal for household use	Female farmers perceived their role as important in shrimp farming due to ownership status

# Thailand : Issues

Tilapia	Shrimp
Female farmers did not feel constrained as women in doing cage culture or shrimp farming, esp they work in partnership with their husbands	
Household work did not prevent them to participate but could limit their time	
Empowered to have ideas to improve operations for more income, or make decisions	
Government support to improve tilapia production	They can go to nearby government stations for consultation of problems
Constraints identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distance from homestead</li><li>• High cost of operation if no access to finances</li><li>• Lack of technical knowledge</li><li>• Management intensity of operations</li><li>• Household responsibilities</li></ul>	Constraints identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited land to expand operations even if they have more knowledge</li><li>• Workload could be high but can hire workers</li><li>• High cost lead to more debts</li><li>• Heavy losses due to diseases esp EMS</li></ul>



## Mrs. Mam S. Thailand

- Tilapia cage farmer (1<sup>st</sup> one to establish in her area)
- Rice farmer

“I have more control of our fish and rice farming business than my husband. I can make my own decisions about farm operations. I can do everything that a man can do in the farm, even heavy work. People here perceive me as economically better-off.”



# Ms. Siyarut Isarawongchai

## Thailand

- Bio-shrimp farmer
- Entrepreneur
- Wholesale market owner



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# Ms Sunee Kanrith Thailand

- Small-scale Shrimp Farmer
- School Teacher

“I have a farm manager who handles the farm operations. When I visit my farm, I can interact with my manager and workers without any difficulty.”



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# Vietnam : Tilapia cages and Rice-Shrimp

Tilapia cages	Rice-Shrimp
<p>Women's involvement limited mainly input stage and sales and marketing in local markets</p>	<p>Both men and women operate small scale farms</p>
<p>Women have to balance their household and other activities with the farm work</p>	<p>Women: active in small scale collection /harvest ; assisting in feeding, cleaning, financial and savings, along with housework</p>
<p>Major roles by men:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation and technical matters</li> <li>• Credits/loans and repayments</li> <li>• Seed and feeding</li> <li>• Farm financial, price, selling decisions</li> </ul>	<p>Men: intensive operations, heavy technical and management requirements, marketing communications</p>
<p>Both make decisions on how to use income for spending especially for family and household</p>	<p>Heavy or physical work stereotyped as male activity ; Women constrained by heavy workload and lack of technical training</p>

# Vietnam : Issues

Tilapia cages	Rice-Shrimp
Perceived risk for women re: far location of cages (middle of river)	
Cultural norms for men to do heavy workload, responsible if high investments, and to face risks to protect the women	Cultural issue of men regarded as head of the household might limit women from actively participating
Lack of technical knowledge and training	
Women can be more involved if fish farming work is not seen as added burden to their responsibilities in the home	
Environmental and economic factors affect both but inadequate skills and lack of access to opportunities and technology can put women at a disadvantage	





# Reflections

- Household or small-scale operations : women are already involved. How can they be more empowered?
- Will increasing participation be an added burden without compensation?
- Beyond increasing participation or involvement, look at how women are treated, compensated, protected? How do they feel in the workplace?
- How can men do to share the burden of household / family responsibilities that women carry everyday?
- How can public/private/civic sectors support empowerment of women in aquaculture?
- Migrant labor in aquaculture?