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

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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
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)
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

1. Starting Farm
   - Male: 50, Female: 27

2. Location Selecting
   - Male: 53, Female: 27

3. Cage Construction
   - Male: 57, Female: 23

4. Acquiring Fund
   - Male: 47, Female: 33

5. Registration
   - Male: 63, Female: 37

6. Tilapia Cage Farm

7. Purchasing Fry
   - Male: 53, Female: 30

8. Feeding
   - Male: 43, Female: 27

9. Feeding Decision
   - Male: 43, Female: 27

10. Purchasing Farm Inputs
    - Male: 53, Female: 24

11. Culturing

12. Harvesting

13. Income Management
    - Male: 10, Female: 67

14. Selling

15. Average Farming Decision
    - Male: 41, Female: 28

16. Problem Solving
    - Male: 53, Female: 40

17. Knowledge Inquiries
    - Male: 53, Female: 40

18. Emergencies Dealing
    - Male: 63, Female: 30

19. Selling Decision
    - Male: 30, Female: 23

Symbols:
- Male: xx
- Female: xx
- Participation Percentage: 0%
Thailand: SS Marine Shrimp

- Location Selecting
  - Pond Construction
    - Acquiring Fund
      - Registration
        - Starting Farm
          - Purchasing Seed
            - Feeding
              - Purchasing Farm Inputs
                - Income Management
      - Shrimp Seed Stocking
        - Culturing
          - Harvesting
            - Selling
  - Knowledge Acquisition
    - Know-how
      - Operation Knowledge Inquiries
        - Record Keeping
          - Feed Brands selection
            - Emergencies Dealing
              - Selling Decision
                - Male: Female

Participation Percentage

Symbols:
- XX : XX
- Male
- Female
- Symbols
## Thailand : Tilapia and Shrimp

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

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<tr>
<td>Female farmers did not feel constrained as women in doing cage culture or shrimp farming, esp they work in partnership with their husbands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household work did not prevent them to participate but could limit their time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowered to have ideas to improve operations for more income, or make decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government support to improve tilapia production</td>
<td>They can go to nearby government stations for consultation of problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraints identified:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Distance from homestead</td>
<td>• Limited land to expand operations even if they have more knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High cost of operation if no access to finances</td>
<td>• Workload could be high but can hire workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of technical knowledge</td>
<td>• High cost lead to more debts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Management intensity of operations</td>
<td>• Heavy losses due to diseases esp EMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Household responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mrs. Mam S.
Thailand

- Tilapia cage farmer (1st 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 Isarawongchaisri
Thailand

- Bio-shrimp farmer
- Entrepreneur
- Wholesale market owner

#MakeItHappen
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.”
### Vietnam: Tilapia cages and Rice-Shrimp

<table>
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<th>Tilapia cages</th>
<th>Rice-Shrimp</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women’s involvement</strong></td>
<td>Both men and women operate small scale farms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women have to balance their household and other activities with the farm work</strong></td>
<td>Women: active in small scale collection/harvest; assisting in feeding, cleaning, financial and savings, along with housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major roles by men:</strong></td>
<td>Men: intensive operations, heavy technical and management requirements, marketing communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Operation and technical matters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Credits/loans and repayments</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Seed and feeding</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Farm financial, price, selling decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Both make decisions on how to use income for spending especially for family and household</strong></td>
<td>Heavy or physical work stereotyped as male activity; Women constrained by heavy workload and lack of technical training</td>
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## Vietnam: Issues

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