

# Sectorial Gender Action Plans (GAP) hardly reduce gender inequality in Aquaculture & Fisheries

Case-study from Vietnam

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## Background

Since *Beijing Platform of Action* in 1995 :

1. Specific gender oriented pilot projects interventions
2. Gender balanced aquaculture development
3. Mainstream gender in policy-making, budgets, actions.

*AquASEM-09-WP*, Empowering vulnerable stakeholders:

1. Share country experiences and best practices;
2. Identify strategies to promote
  - appropriate technologies and
  - greater women participation;
3. Develop action plans empowering poor farmers and women to make Gender Mainstreaming (GMS) effective.



## Vietnamese Gender policy.

After Beijing Platform of Action in 1997:

- Laws on national gender strategy =>
- MoFi's 1<sup>st</sup> Strategic GP & GAP 2006-2010;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> GAP 2011-2015 aligned with
- MARD's 2nd Strategic Gender Plan (2011-2020);
- Some provincial GAP fisheries => active implementation.

Recurrent project for gender support, e.g.:

- 6-1995 to 6-1996 Vietnamese Women Union & ProFound
- 2000 - 2002 "Aquaculture Development in Northern Uplands".
- 2011 Spain-FAO Reg. Fisheries Livelihoods Pr. (RFLP)  
has pilot in 3 villages of Thua Thien Hue Province.

Is there any sense in still doing pilots?



## Women in Vietnamese aquaculture.

Traditionally in uplands fish farming = male activity;  
women involved little, no say in techniques or investments.

In Mekong Delta, women developed aquaculture  
during the home-bound period of their reproductive life.

Presently, involved in most stages of fish farming:

1. women own and lead production farms,
2. Women own and lead processing companies,
3. Women own/lead hatcheries in North-Vietnam.

However matters are more complex:

In Mekong delta females not allowed in hatcheries;  
In general role of women in planning & policy making  
weak due to low levels of participation.



## Impact of Gender pilots and GAP

ProFound's project had active women due to:

- Organisation within communities, and
- including husbands, community power and VWU.

"Aquaculture Dev. in Northern Uplands"

- confirmed crucial use of existing organisations (VWU)
- Avoid setting up parallel structures.

"Fisheries Livelihoods Programme"

- teamed up with VWU to address fishing communities.

Aquac. dep. Ben Tre province had GAP (-2012) =>

- More women' member of committees
- Increase in the salaries of industrial workers.



## Methods 2 day Workshop

- Overview GAP of Vietnam & other countries;
- Results of the GAP in Ben Tre province;
- Inventory & review and aggregation of experiences on implementing the national GAP in seven provinces;
- Define Problem Tree in break-out groups;
- Aggregate & review the Problem Tree in plenary;
- Turn the Problem Tree in an Objective Tree;
- Compose, review, complete & consolidate Logical & Action Framework.



## Constraints to Gender Equality - B

### Women

- Responsibilities & roles in A & F are not recognized;
- Cultural prohibitions for marine boats & hatcheries;
- Limited access to
  - financial capital,
  - technologies,
  - extension services;
- Get less paid for the same labour;
- Suffer loss of income & assets due to reproduction.



## Constraints to Gender Equality - A

- Roles & perceptions based upon culture & customs ;
- Preconceptions / prejudices on gender;
- Pressure on giving birth (to boys);
  - => limits time for career & education.
- Violence against vulnerable genders;
- Housework and the related inferiority complex =>
- Women not confident to carry out assignments.
- Physical limitation for heavy work of some A&F tasks, i.e. heavy gears and long trip on boats.



## Constraints Gender equality - C

### Not many women in decision making on A & F;

- Education in A & F requires heavy practical work;
- Work division based upon the customary occupations;
- Disadvantaged in recruitment and appointments;
- Mothers lack time to get certificates :
  - Reproductive role;
  - Early age of retirement compared to men.
- Not on priority list for complementary training:
  - Not meeting prerequisites (education, certificates),
  - Not found useful by male leaders.



## Evidence for subjective constraints

Difference in perception on tasks spouse / wife.  
(Kuala Besut, Terengganu, Hamid et al. 2013a).

- 6 to 24 % of interviewed women had 12 tasks in pond farming: buy seed, transfer fish from hatchery, prepare & buy feed, feeding, checking for diseases, medication, harvest & sell fish, post-harvest pond work draining & cleaning.
- Wife/man agreed on who did what in domestic sphere,
- However, regarding aquaculture:
  - 22% women said to contribute to cage & pond culture work.
  - but the number of husband recognizing this contribution was:
    - One (out of 51 = 4%) in the cage culture activities,
    - None (out of 51) in the case of pond culture.



Sectorial GAP not address **the** constraint to gender equality = attitude of men & family

In weak patriarchy also, to change attitude we need:

- Broad public to perceive women as equally
  - important as men in politics, sports & social live,
  - good in business => able to earn as much money.
- Women to gain self-confidence through e.g.
  - Training to become aware they can reach their goals without conceding physical favours.
- Men to change behaviour & attitude (become aware).

Means to use : • Multi media: TV, games, theatre  
• Policies in education & administration



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Some countries, such as the Philippines, realised that GAP need a budget, and that

- both GAP & specific gender budget need to be decentralised.

Moreover:

- The leaders need gender training and
- be accountable for reaching GAP goals

- but even then .....



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Gender equality will be a continuous struggle,



just like the battle for freedom / liberty.



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