GENDER ANALYSIS AND STAKEHOLDER MAPPING IN CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

FINAL REPORT

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<td>ACTIP</td>
<td>ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<td>CITES</td>
<td>Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora</td>
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<td>CHP</td>
<td>Comfortable Housing Project</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Nongovernmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTI</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organization</td>
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<td>MMP</td>
<td>Mobile and Migrant Population</td>
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<td>MSM</td>
<td>Men Who Have Sex with Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTFP</td>
<td>Non-Timber Forest Products</td>
<td></td>
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<td>PDR</td>
<td>People's Democratic Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWID</td>
<td>People Who Inject Drugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>RDCS</td>
<td>Regional Development Cooperation Strategy</td>
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<td>RDMA</td>
<td>Regional Development Mission Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>REDD+</td>
<td>Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Social Impact, Inc.</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and Medium-Size Enterprises</td>
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<td>SOGIE</td>
<td>Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>TG</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>Trafficking in Persons</td>
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<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UN-ACT</td>
<td>United Nations Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollar</td>
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<td>WPS</td>
<td>Women, Peace, and Security</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) must understand and navigate gender dynamics within and across countries. In developing its five-year Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS), RDMA will use this study to inform strategy development and provide a foundation for integrating gender into project and activity work. The RDCS development team will use this study to identify macro- and sector-level gender inequalities and obstacles to female empowerment.

This study identifies and discusses gender gaps in the following eight sectors: energy; natural resource management; trade; health, including malaria, human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and emerging pandemic threats; violent extremism and conflict; trafficking in persons; wildlife trafficking; and higher education and youth workforce development. For each sector, the study addresses issues of differential access; gender roles and norms; leadership and decision making; differential impacts of development policies; and, where possible, intersectionality of gender-specific trends with other categories such as age, ethnicity, and disability.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The Social Impact, Inc. (SI) team comprised two experts with experience in research on gender in Southeast Asia. The team conducted a comprehensive literature review of over 220 documents across six countries, agreed upon with USAID: Cambodia, China, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. The literature was derived from academic sources; government and civil society reports; media; public surveys (where available); and bilateral, multilateral, and other sources of publicly available reports. The team used a thematic approach to identifying literature, using search terms that aligned with the topic areas. After reviewing the literature, the team undertook country-specific and sector analyses to identify issues, trends, and themes in response to USAID’s research questions. The analysis was conducted using comparison and triangulation of qualitative data sources to confirm, cross-validate, and corroborate findings.

This study has several limitations. First, the study relies only on secondary data, as the statement of work did not include primary data collection among men and women who experience challenges, barriers, and other obstacles to gender equality in the region. Second, more literature was available for some themes and sectors than for others, and sex-disaggregated data were limited, particularly in natural resource management, energy, and wildlife trafficking. Finally, literature on intersectionality trends was very limited; nevertheless, important findings on macro- or sector-level regional trends in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI), ethnic, and migrant populations are included to the extent possible.

FINDINGS

The summary findings for each sector across USAID’s gender domains of analysis are described below in Table 1.

Table 1: Regional Findings across Sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USAID GENDER DOMAIN OF ANALYSIS</th>
<th>FINDINGS</th>
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<td>Energy</td>
<td>Women lack representation in local, regional, and national leadership and decision making in the energy sector. This lack of representation is largely due to the sector’s male-dominated character and the prevalent gender stereotypes that reinforce the idea that women do not belong to this space and that their primary role is as homemaker and family caregiver.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Finding 1: Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practice

Despite women’s contribution to the energy sector and responsibilities for energy collection and use, their role tends to be poorly supported by policymakers, which results in gender-blind policies that ignore women’s specific needs and vulnerabilities.

## Finding 2: Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Women lack access to quality electricity (more so in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar), and vulnerable and marginalized households in these countries, particularly female-headed and poor households, face systematic limitations in access to electricity. The expansion of clean and renewable energy across all six countries comes with both benefits and risks, particularly related to plant construction and its impact on gender-based violence (GBV) and employment opportunities.

## Trade

### Patterns of Power and Decision Making

Except for some isolated cases of successful female leaders in export industries, women are underrepresented in high-level, high-paid jobs in the sector. Traditional gender norms limit women’s ability to enter more skilled occupations, including management positions, as women continue to bear the primary responsibility for unpaid care work at home.

### Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Although some women own and successfully lead small and medium-size enterprises, they face limitations in access to and control over assets and resources as their businesses tend to be smaller than male-owned ones. LGBTI individuals face exclusion and discrimination in the sector.

## Natural Resource Management

### Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices

Laws and policies on environmental protection and natural resource management exist in all six countries in some form; however, implementation of these laws is a challenge. All countries except China are partners in the United Nations (UN) Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Programme (REDD+), which, in addition to its goal of mitigating climate change, aims to improve women’s decision making in natural resource management. Traditional laws in China and Lao PDR discriminate against women in land rights and access to resources. In general, laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices remain gender blind and, in some cases, gender exploitative.

### Cultural Norms and Beliefs

Patriarchal cultural norms and gender stereotypes in Southeast Asia constitute barriers to women’s empowerment. As a consequence, the natural resource sector in Southeast Asia is largely gender imbalanced, with the prevailing belief that natural resource management is a man’s profession.

### Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Women in Southeast Asia are responsible for taking care of the family, including preparing food and/or fetching water and managing household chores while contributing large amounts of time to agricultural production. They are also heavily involved in forestry-related activities. In all six countries, inadequate, limited, or lack of access to clean drinking water, particularly in rural areas, becomes a time and labor challenge for many women, who are forced to travel long distances to fetch water.

### Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

A range of socioeconomic, social, and structural factors create and sustain an environment in which women in Southeast Asia own fewer and smaller land parcels than men. In agriculture, gender inequalities persist, including the gender pay gap for agricultural labor. This is an important factor in slowing down female empowerment, which plays out in all six countries. In Myanmar, despite the
<table>
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<th>USAID GENDER DOMAIN OF ANALYSIS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government’s commitments to ensure equal pay for work of equal value, women earn approximately 20 percent less per day than men.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of Power and Decision Making</td>
<td>Women and men in Southeast Asia also experience inequality in access to information and knowledge to manage natural resources. Across the region, women are disadvantaged in the use of available technology. Furthermore, women have less access to agricultural training programs than men. This translates into reduced decision-making power, leadership, and ability to participate effectively in the sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Norms and Beliefs</td>
<td>Discriminatory gender norms related to women’s sexuality, taboos around discussing sexuality and female sexual behavior, unequal power and gender dynamics, and sociocultural barriers to accessing comprehensive family planning increase the risk of new HIV infections among females. Cultural taboos around women’s agency may also hamper women’s abilities to negotiate safe sex—e.g., women are supposed to remain passive and are perceived as innocent and not knowledgeable, while men are expected to lead in sexual matters. In addition, GBV is a risk factor for HIV infection. LGBTI individuals are at particular risk of HIV infections and experience high rates of marginalization and discrimination in access to HIV care and treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices</td>
<td>The six countries mostly lack laws, policies, and regulations addressing the HIV epidemic that are gender transformative or even gender responsive, although many have integrated women-focused policies into national frameworks. This implies that institutional practices that influence the context of HIV prevention and response in the region are often gender blind and, in some cases, gender discriminatory, particularly against LGBTI individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of Power and Decision Making</td>
<td>Access to HIV and other sexual health–related resources and services is influenced by gender and patriarchal power dynamics. In a relationship, financial disparities and intimate partner violence can often hinder a woman’s ability to negotiate safe sex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use</td>
<td>Pregnant women and mobile and migrant populations (MMPs) are particularly vulnerable to malaria across the region. MMPs, particularly in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Thailand, are a vulnerable group for malaria control because they are usually poorly connected to routine public health interventions and surveillance systems and are often outside the malaria control group. Women may be more exposed to malaria risk due to their household responsibilities, such as preparing food, fetching water, and collecting food, which take place in the early morning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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1 Please see Article 350 of the Constitution, [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Myanmar_2008](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Myanmar_2008)
## USAID GENDER ANALYSIS AND STAKEHOLDER MAPPING IN CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

### FINDINGS

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<th>Domain of Analysis</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td><strong>Violent Extremism and Conflict</strong></td>
<td>None of the six countries has a national action plan for implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace, and security (WPS). Some engagement by the Southeast Asian countries on WPS has been shown, however, and China recently participated in the WPS Open Debate, although the country made no commitments to implement the WPS agenda. The same applies to Vietnam and Lao PDR. In Myanmar, the government has not implemented the gender quota in peace negotiations, as mandated by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and women’s low participation in the peace process challenges female empowerment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Norms and Beliefs</strong></td>
<td>Patriarchal norms still dictate the roles that women and men play in society, and this is also true for gender trends in violent extremism and conflict. In all six countries, women’s roles in peace and security processes remain marginal, with a slight exception in Cambodia, where women have played important informal roles in peace-building processes. The reasons behind women’s unequal participation and representation in political processes are gendered norms that situate women’s roles predominantly within their homes and family realms, whereas politics and decision making are a largely male-dominated sphere. Even when women do hold decision-making positions, traditional cultural biases may undermine women’s voice and agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to and Control over Assets and Resources</strong></td>
<td>In China and Myanmar, discrimination or bias against minorities by the government deprives minority women of their voices and rights. The same is true in Lao PDR for Hmong women, some of whom are hiding from government troops with their families in the jungle, where they are experiencing extreme conditions during pregnancy, labor, and nursing. Without access to medical care or medicines, they suffer from high maternal and child mortality rates. Obstacles like these challenge women’s ability to control the outcomes of their lives and health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trafficking in Persons</strong></td>
<td>All six countries have legal instruments that criminalize trafficking in persons in some form; however, they are not always consistent with international law. Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, in their capacity as ASEAN member states, have also ratified the legally binding ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP). Significant gaps, such as corruption and inadequate protection for victims, compromise implementation of laws across the region. Women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation are especially vulnerable, as they may be subjected to biases and discrimination by the legal system and regarded as criminals themselves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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8 S. Kounnavong, “Malaria Elimination in Lao PDR.”
9 See Peace Women and their list of Member States that are signatories: https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states
10 Peace Women has reported on the debates on their website at: https://www.peacewomen.org/profile/country-region-profile-china
11 http://www.peacewomen.org/member-states
13 United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Women’s Leadership as a Route to Greater Empowerment. Cambodia Case Study (Washington DC: USAID, 2014).
USAID GENDER
DOMAIN OF
ANALYSIS

FINDINGS

sphere, whereas women are more subservient by nature, both in the public sphere as well as in relation to men. This message reinforces problematic gender stereotypes, especially concerning sexual aggressiveness, assertiveness, and agency. In the six countries, there is an overall acceptance of men’s sexual promiscuity, whereas women’s virginity is still considered virtuous. This means on the one hand that the demand for sexual services by men is culturally accepted, which fuels the demand for prostitution services. The social norm of women’s virginity rendering them pure or valuable creates enormous stigmas for women who are in prostitution or being trafficked for sex, since they are viewed as damaged goods.

Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Women and girls are, in most cases, trafficked into domestic servitude, the sex trade, and forced labor, including work in the garment industry and other types of factory work. Men and boys are trafficked predominantly into large infrastructure projects, coal mines, and the fisheries industry.

Patterns of Power and Decision Making

Women are underrepresented in leadership positions and hold fewer positions of decision-making power in both the public and private sectors. This also applies to legal enforcement of trafficking prosecution, prevention, and response. Southeast Asia’s male-dominated and gender-biased justice systems are still causing a myriad of barriers for women seeking help, especially for sexual violence and trafficking for sexual exploitation.¹⁴

Wildlife Trafficking

Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Both men and women are affected by and involved in illegal wildlife trafficking. However, gendered differences play a role in how men and women participate; for instance, gender norms and traditional divisions of labor result in men being more involved in wildlife hunting, whereas women are more likely to be involved in selling illegal wildlife goods at markets. Similar gender trends are reflected in the ways men and women participate in wildlife conservation and protection efforts, with women being overwhelmingly underrepresented.

Higher Education and Youth Workforce Development

Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Discriminatory social attitudes and rigid gender norms create barriers for female access to certain strains of higher-level education and youth workforce development, which constrains the extent to which females participate in the benefits of the labor market, despite their overall higher enrollment in higher education.

Cultural Norms and Beliefs

Strong gender differences exist at the higher education level, with males overwhelmingly dominating science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and women completing coursework in crafts, health care, education and social sciences, and tourism and hospitality. As a result, female students face challenges in entering professions and positions traditionally considered male dominated in which power resides and decisions are made.

CONCLUSIONS

Rapid growth, structural transformation, and poverty reduction have been accompanied by progress toward gender equality in several key areas. Economic development has led to the closing of gender gaps in school enrollments, and access to economic opportunities has also expanded, particularly among younger, better educated women. However, whereas progress has been particularly visible in China, Thailand, and Vietnam, the rapidity and magnitude of these developments in gains and benefits

for women have not been matched in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar. In these countries, women face challenges in access to and control over assets and resources across all eight sectors.

Though Southeast Asian women may have more access to and control over assets and resources than their mothers and grandmothers, they continue to be underrepresented in decision making and leadership in many segments of the economy in both public and private spheres. The male-dominated character of most sectors and the patriarchal nature of the institutional practices within them limit how and to what extent women are involved in decision making and leadership.

Though significant progress has been achieved in introducing national laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices that promote gender equality, the implementation of these laws remains weak, and women and girls remain highly vulnerable to gender-based violence, often at the hands of an intimate partner. Furthermore, policy environments remain mostly gender blind in the following sectors: energy, trade, natural resource management, wildlife trafficking, and violent extremism and conflict, with some recognition of gender-specific challenges in health, education, and trafficking (these, however, vary by country).

One common denominator, across all sectors and in all countries, are the traditional norms, cultural traditions, and commonly reinforced and practiced stereotypes around gender roles, responsibilities, and time use, which sustain a gendered division of labor (reflected in how men and women engage in and are affected by the various sectors) and impede progress in gender equality in the respective countries and across the region. For example, women are considered mainly responsible for caregiving, household duties, and home-based economic activities, whereas men are more involved in the public sphere and in paid economic activities outside the home, affecting the roles they play in the sectors.
INTRODUCTION

Over the last several decades, women in Southeast Asia have made social, political, and economic gains. Thus, Southeast Asia fares well on some measures of gender equity. For example, in education women have far greater access and opportunity than would have been available a few decades ago. In Thailand, there are now on average more female graduates than male; however, this educational success has not always translated into economic success. Women are often concentrated in less well-remunerated occupations and contend with almost exclusively male management. Also, gender-based violence (GBV), lack of political voice, and cultural norms of masculinity and femininity that privilege men, especially in economic and political arenas, further women’s marginalization to varying degrees. Finally, men are almost completely excluded as categories for inquiry, being relegated to a supporting role in gender analysis and often in simplified stereotypical tropes.

USAID’s Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) seeks to understand and navigate gender dynamics within and across countries. A better understanding of the gendered aspects of various sectors is essential as it undertakes regional work and supports bilateral missions. RDMA is developing its five-year Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS) and is looking for various topical input.

This gender analysis and stakeholder mapping will be an integral component of RDMA’s approach to strategy development. The analysis considers the gendered aspects of eight key sectors—energy, trade, natural resource management, health, violent extremism and conflict, trafficking in persons, wildlife trafficking, and higher education and youth workforce development—across six countries: Cambodia, China, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. By investigating USAID’s five domains of change related to gender, the analysis will not only inform strategy development but also provide a foundation for integrating gender into project and activity work by identifying macro- or sector-level gender inequalities or obstacles to female empowerment and social inclusion.

STUDY SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This research will augment ongoing strategy and project-level design in preparation for development of the RDCS and is a component of USAID/RDMA’s commitment to strong planning and evidence-based decision making. The primary audience is the RDCS development team, who are currently in the analytical phase of RDCS development. This analysis will feed into Phase 1 of RDCS development, in contributing an understanding of the gendered aspects of sectoral work. The analysis will also serve as a resource for USAID and implementing partners as they design and plan projects and activities.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Part I: The analysis identifies and explains, to the extent practicable, gender disparities in the following eight sectors: energy; natural resource management; trade; health, including malaria, human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and emerging pandemic threats; violent extremism and conflict; trafficking in persons; wildlife trafficking; and higher education and youth workforce development.

Using primarily secondary data sources and focusing on broad trends over the last five years, the analysis addresses the following areas:

A. Differences in the status of women and men and their differential access to assets, resources, opportunities, and services.

B. The influence of gender roles and norms on the division of time between paid employment, unpaid work (including subsistence production and care for family members), and volunteer activities.

C. The influence of gender roles and norms on leadership roles and decision making and constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females.
D. Potential differential impacts of development policies and programs on males and females, including unintended or negative consequences, if identified in the literature.
E. Intersectionality of the key gender-specific trends with other categories, including age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, and disability.

To analyze the trends for the sectors listed above, the team used USAID’s five domains:

- Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices that influence the context in which men and women act and make decisions.
- Cultural norms and beliefs.
- Gender roles, responsibilities, and time use.
- Access to and control over assets and resources.
- Patterns of power and decision making.

**Part II:** To better organize country data, an overview (detailed fact sheet) is developed for each country: Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. The overview lists key gender gaps identified in Part I, notes key sex-disaggregated statistics, and provides a brief country profile of the status of men and women in terms of leadership roles in society and gender norms. There is also a brief overview of key intersectionality findings as they relate to gender and female empowerment.

**Part III:** An annotated bibliography is provided with the major research/literature organized by sector. The bibliography clearly notes the country/ies applicable.

**METHODOLOGY**

The analysis used a qualitative research approach through desk review of relevant sources. The research team collected data through a review of relevant literature and U.S. government and donor documents (including those of multilateral development banks). The questions investigated included the following:

- What are the differences in status of women and men in the region?
- How does access to assets, resources, opportunities, and services differ between men and women?
- What influence do gender roles and norms have on division of time between paid employment and unpaid work (including subsistence production and care for family members)?
- What influence do gender roles and norms have on leadership roles and decision-making constraints and opportunities?
- What are entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females?
- Is there a potential differential impact of development policies and programs on males and females? Are there negative or unintended consequences of policies and programs that may affect one gender more than the other?
- What are some key intersectionality trends across other categories: age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, and disability?

The desk review was derived from academic sources; government and civil society reports; media; public surveys (where available); and bilateral, multilateral, and other sources of publicly available reports. Types of documents are presented in the annotated bibliography, which is organized by sector and by country/ies. Given the dearth of published peer-reviewed materials on this topic, the initial search was expanded to include gray literature (e.g., publicly available reports and policy statements).
The methodology used by the research team was thematic. The researchers undertook literature searches in response to the key topic areas framing the research questions (using search term combinations such as gender, gender equality, challenges to female empowerment, energy, natural resource management, trade, health [malaria, HIV/AIDS, emerging pandemic threats], violent extremism and conflict, trafficking in persons, wildlife trafficking, higher education and youth workforce development, and Southeast Asia, Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam).

The entire literature search was undertaken by two experts with experience in research on gender in Southeast Asia. Each researcher focused on three countries and eight sectors as referenced in the statement of work, collated information, and undertook preliminary analysis. Across each country and respective sectors, English language materials were searched. Following this process, the two experts collaborated to ensure that key materials located in searches for all six countries were not omitted. However, citing every piece of research on the topic was beyond the scope of this review. In particular, the review did not include a systematic search of the numerous unpublished, local-language publications and reports that discuss gender trends in selected sectors but are available mostly as hard copies only.

Data analysis was conducted using comparison and triangulation of qualitative data sources through the desk review. This analysis occurred concurrently according to its triangulation design to confirm, cross-validate, and corroborate findings. This triangulation helped to ensure more reliable findings. The mapping and final report provide findings and conclusions appropriate for RDMA’s strategic planning process. Utmost effort was taken to frame findings to the research questions in accordance with the RDCS design process.

**LIMITATIONS**

First, the desk-based nature of this analysis was a drawback as it included only secondary data. It precluded the research team from collecting real-life stories from men and women who experience challenges, barriers, and other obstacles to gender equality in the six countries. In addition, the literature collected and analyzed included only English language publications.

Second, although the team aimed to uncover as much information as possible, limited research time prevented greater in-depth analysis. Although the research was intended to analyze the gender trends utilizing USAID’s five domains, due to limited data available, the research team was not able to address these domains equally across all sectors and in all six countries analyzed. Further, the general lack of country-based sex-disaggregated data for sectors such as natural resource management, energy, and wildlife trafficking limited the understanding and scope of gender inequalities in access to assets, resources, opportunities, and services; the influence of gender roles and norms on the division of time between paid or unpaid employment or volunteer activities; and their differential impact on men and women. Further, considering the paucity of qualitative and quantitative gender-specific data, many of the sector-specific gender issues identified may be of local significance as opposed to country-wide relevance. Similarly, the research findings may not be generalizable to the whole region. There are, however, parallel gender issues across the six countries, and the country-specific findings on challenges, inequalities, and obstacles to female empowerment across the sectors can be translated into regional trends.

Third, while utmost effort has been undertaken by the research team to ensure the analysis captures the intersectionality of gender trends in the region, including age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, and disability, the analysis focused on trends among hetero-normative populations of the region. Nevertheless, important findings on macro- or sector-level regional trends in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) and ethnic and migrant populations are included in the analysis.

Therefore, the presented conclusions may not be fully representative of the entire region. For these and other reasons, it is possible that the regional analysis may not give a comprehensive picture of

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the on-the-ground reality, although findings arguably have some generalizability. It is, however, an important step in understanding challenges, inequalities, and obstacles to female empowerment across the eight selected sectors.

The research team noted several important limitations and challenges that influenced the scope and results of stakeholder mapping. First, many websites of local organizations are not accessible in English. Many of the smaller, local organizations exist on the web but may not currently be operational. Yet their contribution to promoting gender equality in selected sectors may be substantial at the local or national level.

Second, many of the mapped organizations are not sector specific. Rather, they focus on the cross-sectoral character of gender equality promotion. This means that they promote gender equality and female empowerment in various sectors at the same time—for instance, by addressing gender disparities in health in connection with GBV prevention in the context of conflict. The extent and significance of the cross-sectoral approach cannot be underestimated but precluded the research team from identifying them as sector specific (hence, some organizations are characterized as doing gender in all sectors).

Third, for many of the organizations, doing gender has a differential meaning or character. For many of the mapped organizations at the local level, addressing gender inequality in respective sectors meant networking around female empowerment, capacity development, or training provision. At the regional and international levels (larger local nongovernmental organizations [NGOs] and international nongovernmental organizations [INGOs] working in more than one country), addressing gender inequality in the respective sectors meant gender mainstreaming across their programs. Furthermore, sector-specific organizations focus on collecting some sex-disaggregated data, or mainstream gender by advocating for female empowerment in access to and use of resources; however, promoting gender equality is not always part of their mission and agenda. Nevertheless, these have been identified as potential partners.

**HOW THE REPORT IS ORGANIZED**

This report is organized by sector: energy, trade, natural resource management, health, violent extremism and conflict, trafficking in persons, wildlife trafficking, and higher education and youth workforce development. Each section begins with a regional overview and then describes selected gender domains of analysis with specific country examples and regional trends. The domains of analysis for each sector were selected based on relevance and availability of literature. Due to the file size, the country fact sheets are shared in a separate document. The annotated bibliography appears in Annex II. The stakeholder mapping list is shared with USAID separately in an Excel document.
REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN ENERGY

OVERVIEW

Energy supply, demand, access, and use vary widely among and within the six countries (Table 2). For example, whereas populations in China, Thailand, and Vietnam enjoy full access to energy, limitations persist in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar. Cambodia’s low domestic energy supply makes electricity prohibitively expensive for many—especially in rural, low-income, and female-headed households—and access to electricity even in grid-connected households is limited and unreliable. Currently, 80 percent of the Lao PDR rural population and 97 percent of the urban population have access to electricity, with progress in the rural areas limited by inaccessible terrain, widespread unexploded ordinances (UXOs), and low economic growth. Although Myanmar possesses rich energy resources, only about 25 percent of its population has regular access to electricity—lower than a host of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the lowest in the Asia-Pacific region.

Table 2: Main Energy Sources in the Six Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Energy Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAMBODIA</td>
<td>Energy supply depends largely on diesel and heavy fuel oil; electricity is produced by hydro-dams and coal. Hydroelectric power is the main source of renewable energy. China is a leading producer of wind and solar power and the primary global producer of solar panels. Reliant on coal (which constituted 62 percent of energy use in 2016), China is the largest coal producer and consumer. Eighty percent of primary energy demand is obtainable by renewable energy sources, including hydropower, biogas, and solar energy (11 percent), and the remaining 20 percent from oil and coal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHINA</td>
<td>Energy supply depends largely on diesel and heavy fuel oil; electricity is produced by hydro-dams and coal. Hydroelectric power is the main source of renewable energy. China is a leading producer of wind and solar power and the primary global producer of solar panels. Reliant on coal (which constituted 62 percent of energy use in 2016), China is the largest coal producer and consumer. Eighty percent of primary energy demand is obtainable by renewable energy sources, including hydropower, biogas, and solar energy (11 percent), and the remaining 20 percent from oil and coal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAO PDR</td>
<td>Energy supply depends largely on diesel and heavy fuel oil; electricity is produced by hydro-dams and coal. Hydroelectric power is the main source of renewable energy. China is a leading producer of wind and solar power and the primary global producer of solar panels. Reliant on coal (which constituted 62 percent of energy use in 2016), China is the largest coal producer and consumer. Eighty percent of primary energy demand is obtainable by renewable energy sources, including hydropower, biogas, and solar energy (11 percent), and the remaining 20 percent from oil and coal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 China’s population has 100 percent access to electricity (Trading Economics https://tradingeconomics.com/china/access-to-electricity-).  
17 Through the state-owned Vietnam Power Group (EVN), Vietnam provides access to electricity for nearly 100 percent of the country (Trading Economics https://tradingeconomics.com/vietnam/access-to-electricity-percent-of-population-wb-data.html).  
20 Ibid.  
22 The low national average per capita electricity consumption is due to the low electrification rate, low industrial development, and lack of investment. Data from the IHLC Surveys reveal that only 38 percent of households have access to electricity, with pronounced differences between urban (81.3 percent) and rural (22.4 percent) locations. Access is lowest in Chin State (15 percent), Bago State West (13 percent), Bago State East (20 percent), and Rakhine State (23 percent). See UNDP, Integrated Households Living Condition Assessment: Poverty Profile (Yangon: UNDP, 2009–2010), 87.  
23 The low national average per capita electricity consumption is due to the low electrification rate, low industrial development, and lack of investment. Data from the IHLC Surveys reveal that only 38 percent of households have access to electricity, with pronounced differences between urban (81.3 percent) and rural (22.4 percent) locations. Access is lowest in Chin State (15 percent), Bago State West (13 percent), Bago State East (20 percent), and Rakhine State (23 percent). See UNDP, Integrated Households Living Condition Assessment: Poverty Profile (Yangon: UNDP, 2009–2010), 87.  
25 Ibid.  
Primary energy supply includes coal, oil, gas, hydropower, and biomass.

Thailand relies mostly on imported natural gas and oil for primary energy.

Vietnam relies on fossil fuels such as oil, charcoal, and gas to provide for its energy needs, although its renewable energy sector is the region’s largest. Vietnam is increasingly prone to the effects of climate change due to fast-paced development and the resulting environmental pressures (air, land, and over 2,000 miles of coast). The country’s energy consumption is not efficient.

ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS

• Women in Southeast Asia are underrepresented in local, regional, and national leadership and decision making in the energy sector, largely because of gender stereotypes that reinforce women’s primary role as homemaker and family caregiver and that challenge female empowerment. The underrepresentation also results from male predominance in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and related pathways into the energy sector.
• Women’s unequal social position and the male-dominated character of energy institutions create a gender imbalance that leads to gender-blind policies and the exclusion of women’s voices.
• Some research suggests that regional male migration for energy jobs can increase the female spouse’s decision-making power.

CHALLENGES, INEQUITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION MAKING

In Southeast Asia, women’s voice, agency, and participation in the energy sector have advanced in recent decades. Although legal frameworks provide equal rights to men and women in all six countries, however, local customs and social traditions continue to influence and govern patterns of power and decision making and women’s leadership, constraining the achievement of gender equality. Across the region, women lack representation in local, regional, and national decision making in the energy sector (Figure 1).

In Vietnam, rigid, traditional social norms and harmful gender stereotypes, including those related to women’s predominant role as caregiver and household caretaker, limit women’s opportunities for meaningful and active engagement at top positions.

Gender imbalance in the energy sector stems mostly from two related factors: women’s unequal social position and the overall male-dominated character of energy institutions. Despite overall gender equality advances in all six countries over the past several years, women’s access to and control over assets and resources—and control over their own lives—remain weaker than those of men. Men tend to hold decision-making power not only within households but also in community institutions. This trend holds true for the energy sector, which is perceived in all six countries as a

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28 International Organization for Migration (IOM), Gender and Labor Migration in Asia (2009), 16.
29 USAID, Gender Equality in Renewable Energy, 32–33.
30 Ibid., 13.
male-dominated space. This perception is in part spurred by the historical association of the energy industries’ demand for heavy physical labor and manual work, including operation of heavy machinery, work in shifts and demanding hours, geographical isolation, and relocation/migration for work that takes one away from family.32

**Figure 1: Gender Imbalance in Employment and Leadership in the Energy Sector**

The largest power producer in Thailand is the EGAT, a state enterprise managed by the Ministry of Energy. As of 2016, EGAT power plants provided approximately one-third of the country’s electricity. EGAT employs close to 23,000, of which approximately 5,000 (23%) are women. Similar to DEDE, engineers form the core of EGAT’s employees; around 50% are technical staff required to do on-site/field-based work on rotation. This has traditionally restricted women’s career advancement. All eight of EGAT’s executive officers are men. There are some women occupying assistant and deputy manager positions but performing largely administrative roles. Women are mostly concentrated within EGAT’s administrative, accounting, human resources, and finance units. Some women are involved in the marketing of power to distributors, but they do not make up top representatives.


Therefore, identification of energy issues and proposed plans to address them often have an “inadvertent male bias.”33 Women’s limited access to energy employment opportunities, leadership and decision-making positions, information, and technical skills hinders their response to issues such as climate change and prevents their voices, contributions, and needs from being addressed through policy. It is difficult to distinguish between inadvertent and direct bias related to women’s representation and participation in the energy sector (or determine if such difference exists and to what extent) as the existing research evidence is silent on this matter. However, spaces where transformative change could be initiated to provide solutions (e.g., policy and institutional practices that influence the context in which men and women act and make decisions) are gender blind and do not address gender inequalities. Collectively, these gender trends magnify the challenges, inequities, and obstacles to female empowerment in the energy sector (Table 3).34

**Table 3: Power and Decision Making in the Energy Sector**

| Cambodia | Although producers and entrepreneurs of improved clean energy cookstoves and charcoal production are mostly women, the public sector is male dominated.35 |
| Lao PDR | Only a few women hold positions of power in government energy-related ministries. |
| Thailand | Women are underrepresented at executive and decision-making levels in both the public and private sectors, and discussion of energy issues is largely absent of female voices.36 |

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33 Ibid., 13.
34 Ibid., passim.
36 Ibid., 29.
With a few exceptions of prominent women who lead two private companies, the renewable energy sector is almost entirely male-led.\textsuperscript{37} The majority of women are employed in administrative rather than managerial positions.\textsuperscript{38}

**LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES THAT INFLUENCE THE CONTEXT IN WHICH MEN AND WOMEN ACT AND MAKE DECISIONS**

Rigid social norms and gender-in equitable practices that dominate the energy sector impede women’s representation in local, regional, and national decision making, and women have rarely held leadership positions in the sector. In consequence, women’s potential contribution to energy management is overlooked, and their specific needs and vulnerabilities are ignored.\textsuperscript{39}

Women in Southeast Asia contribute substantially to the energy sector. Their role, for instance, in the energy value chain has significant importance for their incomes and, in turn, for the well-being of their entire households. Furthermore, women hold responsibility for household energy, hygiene, and waste management\textsuperscript{40} and are thus in the best position to help mitigate energy sector challenges, including adverse impacts of climate change. However, women’s roles in the sector tend to be poorly supported by policymakers, which results in gender-blind policies.

**ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES**

Gender trends in access to clean and renewable energy sources vary across the six countries. Particularly in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar, vulnerable and marginalized households, particularly female-headed and poor households, face systematic limitations in access to electricity.

- In **Cambodia**, for instance, 97.6 percent of households have access to at least one source of electricity,\textsuperscript{41} but affordability is still a big barrier, and female-headed households find the cost of connection and monthly fees to be substantial hurdles to gaining grid access. Furthermore, there is a significant gender gap in access to improved and clean fuel cookstoves in Cambodia.

- In **Lao PDR**, the rural poor, which are disproportionately represented by women, are the least connected to electricity.

In these two countries, the impact of limited access to and control over energy assets and resources has a gendered dimension. Women are disproportionately affected by energy shortages, as they bear responsibility for collecting alternative sources of energy (e.g., firewood).\textsuperscript{42} These alternative sources

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\textsuperscript{37} These two companies are the Refrigeration Electrical Engineering Corporation and Hoa Phong E&C (Ibid., 31).

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 32.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., passim.

\textsuperscript{40} MoWA, Neary Rattanak IV: Five-Year Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (MoWA, 2014).


\textsuperscript{42} USAID, Gender Equality in Renewable Energy, 17
of energy often are accompanied by significant health risks, such as respiratory damage from burning charcoal without proper ventilation.\textsuperscript{43} In Cambodia, women are largely responsible for cooking and are more likely to be affected by the lack of clean energy and harmful cooking practices, including use of firewood and charcoal and lack of separation of cooking areas from sleeping areas.\textsuperscript{44} In addition, they spend an average of three to four hours a day on energy-related activities such as gathering fuel wood, boiling water, and cooking. In Lao PDR, the rural poor, which disproportionately are women, are the least connected to electricity and in consequence most affected by the negative effects of biomass use.\textsuperscript{45} The lack of access to modern energy services among women in Myanmar has particular negative socioeconomic and health consequences because, as in other countries in the region, women are primarily responsible for food preparation and cooking,\textsuperscript{46} which is fueled primarily by firewood (and charcoal in poorer urban wards).\textsuperscript{47}

Remarkable efforts have expanded access to clean and renewable energy in the six countries. In rural northwest China, for instance, the use of renewable energy improved lives for many women (and men). As energy use becomes more efficient, women’s labor burden from collecting firewood and other nonrenewable cooking fuels declines, which in turn leads to better health and living standards.\textsuperscript{48} In Cambodia, an improved cook stove project supported by the World Bank and multiple NGOs has been empowering women as producers, retailers, and promoters while improving health, energy efficiency, and natural resource management.\textsuperscript{49}

However, despite positive developments, challenges, inequalities, and obstacles to female empowerment have sometimes been amplified and new ones have emerged. In Vietnam, for instance, massive coal and hydroelectric plant construction pollutes the environment and threatens land rights, compromising both women’s and men’s ability to earn a living from the land—though men can more easily gain employment through plant construction. Plant construction also threatens women’s safety, raising the risk of GBV, as male construction crews build the projected plants.\textsuperscript{50} In Thailand, the energy sector’s expansion may have an adverse gendered impact on multiple industries, including mining and quarrying, electricity, gas and water supply, and construction.\textsuperscript{51} Across all of these industries, male employment already outweighs female employment by a ratio of at least 3:1.\textsuperscript{52} However, more research is needed to capture and better understand these trends, particularly among youth as they transition from education into the labor market, as well as among other populations (e.g., minority and ethnic groups; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex [LGBTI] individuals).

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{44} Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN TRADE

OVERVIEW

Over the past several decades, most Southeast Asian countries have experienced high economic growth and closer regional integration. Growth is projected to continue at a steady pace.53 China and Thailand have experienced high growth and are commonly recognized as the region’s more developed countries. Since 2009, China has been the world’s largest exporter of goods and the largest trading nation and is currently the world’s largest economy, although the growth rate is slowing (Table 4).54 Vietnam too has been experiencing an economic boom. Following more than two decades of strong economic growth, Cambodia has attained lower-middle-income status as of 2015,55 with the manufacturing sectors as the main drivers of growth. Gradually, and not without setbacks, economic progress has been experienced by Lao PDR and Myanmar. Lao PDR is the least developed country in the region but has reported important declines in poverty in recent years.56 Myanmar has undertaken substantial economic reforms to develop the economy and boost trade and foreign investment.57 Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar are projected to grow the fastest in the region through 2022, while Vietnam is expected to lead growth among the ASEAN-5 (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam).58

Table 4: Trade Sector at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAIN EXPORT INDUSTRIES AND TRADING PARTNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**CAMBODIA**

Clothing and footwear (garment industry), timber, rubber, rice, fish, tobacco (agriculture and natural resources), and automotive components. Main export trading partners are the United States, Germany, United Kingdom (UK), Japan, and Singapore, and top import origins are Thailand, China, Vietnam, and Singapore.59

Cotton, tea, rice, potatoes, soybeans, electrical machinery, iron and steel products, natural resources (such as aluminum, coal, copper, and iron ore) and clothing and footwear.60

China’s trade partners include the United States, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam.61

Agricultural products and natural resources, wood, clothing, coffee, electricity, metals, corn, and rubber.62 Laos’ main export activity is cross-border trading with Thailand, China, and Vietnam.63

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55 GDP per capita (constant LCU) (World Bank Open Data), accessed January 2019
58 OECD. *Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India 2018.*
59 Please see “The Observatory of Economic Complexities.” Available at: https://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/profile/country/khm/
61 www.worldstopexports.com/china
Myanmar’s main export goods include natural gas, wood products, clothing (garment industry), agricultural products (beans, fish, and rice), and nonagricultural products (such as jade, gems, and other precious stones). Thailand remains a main trading partner, while China and India have been increasingly important through border trade.64

Agricultural products, including rice, rubber, and raw sugar, and nonagricultural products such as refined petroleum, garments, and gold. Other notable exports include computers, delivery trucks, and electronics. Main export destinations include the United States, China, Japan, Australia, and Hong Kong, and the top import origins are China, Japan, the United States, Malaysia, and South Korea.65

Top export industries include electronics, textiles, footwear, and other electrical products. The top export countries are China, Japan, the United States, South Korea, and Germany, and the top import countries are China, South Korea, Japan, and other Asian countries.66

**ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS**

- Women face occupational segregation, often holding lower-level positions than men, and wage discrimination across all six countries.
- Although some women own and successfully lead small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), they face limitations in access to and control over assets and resources as their businesses tend to be smaller than male-owned ones, and LGBTI individuals face exclusion and discrimination.
- Although some gender-specific provisions have gradually been considered to address female empowerment,67 the obligation to, requirements for, and methodologies for collecting gender-specific trade data are not in place, so the trade sector’s country-specific and regional policy developments are largely gender blind.

**CHALLENGES, INEQUITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT**

**PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION MAKING**

In Southeast Asia, women are catching up with men in labor market participation and beginning to outnumber men in many educational fields.68 However, gender-inequitable attitudes and practices persist. Despite the enormous leap forward in the region, social and gender norms and traditions challenge female empowerment in the trade sector and lead to occupational segregation and gender imbalance, especially in decision-making and leadership positions.

Except for some isolated cases of successful female leaders in export industries, women are underrepresented in high-level, high-paid jobs in the sector. Furthermore, women are found mainly in support management functions and in informal, more small-scale businesses compared with men. As a result, women are more likely to be subject to a “glass ceiling” whereby women are on parallel paths that do not lead to equal opportunities and quality of endowments and gains compared with men. For instance, although women represent more than 80 percent of the garment sector labor force in Cambodia, a large majority are engaged at the lowest level of the employment ladder as assembly line workers (whereas men dominate the high-paid supervisory and managerial positions).

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65 Please see “The Observatory of Economic Complexities.” Available at: https://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/profile/country/khm/
67 Some regional initiatives mainstream gender considerations into general trade rules, agreements, and support instruments for women-led businesses; for instance, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum and the Commonwealth Secretariat included gender issues in their agendas.
According to a research study, under four percent of the female garment worker population holds a line leader or office staff role.\(^6^9\)

Governed by patriarchy and unequal gender relations, various segments of the trade sector, particularly formal, are characterized by occupational segregation and wage discrimination. In fact, across all six countries, the most common negative impact of this occupational segregation is the gender wage gap (Figure 2).\(^7^0,^7^1,^7^2\)

**Figure 2: Occupational Segregation in SE Asia**

In **China**, integration into the global market produced gendered segmentation of employment, as well as a gender wage gap.

In **Lao PDR**, occupational segregation is extensive as women’s economic participation is consigned primarily to traditionally female occupations in the trade sector, marked by being lower level, low wage, and/or of a seasonal character, particularly in the retail and services sectors, as well as in agricultural and informal (household) businesses.

In **Vietnam**, occupation segregation in the export industries, particularly in electronics, textiles, and footwear, has constrained women to lower-level jobs and contributes to a significant wage gap.

In all six countries, cumulatively, women earn less than men do. Recent data suggest that women in Cambodia earn only 80.8 percent of men’s earnings.\(^7^3\) Moreover, the disparity between female and male average hourly earnings can range from seven percent for those with a bachelor’s degree or higher to 30 percent for those with secondary or upper secondary degree.\(^7^4\) For instance, in the garment sector women earn about United States Dollar (USD) 92 per month, compared with the USD 109 men make.\(^7^5\)

Other negative impacts of sector-specific, gender-based occupational segregation include a lack of diversity in women’s management and business experience, limited access for women to start and

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\(^7^2\) In 2018, 72 percent of Vietnamese women have joined the labor force. This is higher than the world average of 42 percent and accounts for 48.4 percent of the labor force. Women are the majority employees in the electronics, leather shoes, and textile export sectors (70 percent are women) but do not benefit from this “global supply chain.” (Please see “Despite High Number of Female Vietnamese Laborers, Inequality Persists,” Viet Nam News (January 24, 2018). Available at: https://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/society/194593/despite-high-number-of-female-vietnamese-labourers--inequality-persists.html.

\(^7^3\) Asian Development Bank, Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment in Cambodia (ADB, 2018).


\(^7^5\) Asian Development Bank, Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment in Cambodia.
expand businesses, and career pipeline leakages that prevent women from reaching top positions because of their greater responsibility for family care.\textsuperscript{76} 

Furthermore, the occupational segregation based on gender has led many women, particularly rural women, to dominate the unprotected, informal segments of the trade sector. This is the case in Cambodia, for instance, where approximately 73 percent\textsuperscript{77} of women are in vulnerable employment (e.g., home-based or street/market vendors, as employees in small tailoring or beauty shops, or as domestic workers.)\textsuperscript{78} Such roles are often not protected to the same extent as formal employment in that employees may lack access or the means to contribute to social insurance programs and employers are less likely to follow health and safety regulations.\textsuperscript{79} There have also been reports of sexual abuse and labor exploitation of women in the electronics sector in Vietnam. This in turn has serious negative health-related consequences, such as unusual miscarriage, although this area remains generally unstudied across the region.\textsuperscript{80}

Across the region, traditional gender and social norms limit women’s ability to enter more skilled occupations, including management positions in the trade sector. For example, women continue to bear the major responsibility for unpaid care work, in addition to their paid jobs,\textsuperscript{81} which often prevents them from accessing employment opportunities. Although some local, national, and regional organizations and multilaterals (Asian Development Bank [ADB], the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], and UN Women, among others) are trying to address or transform inequitable gender and social norms, these efforts are mostly program-based, targeting specific groups or geographic locations within the region or the analyzed countries. This analysis did not identify any specific gender-transformative policy developments or legislative processes to mitigate the root causes of gender-inequitable practices in the trade sector or to address the risk factors for women’s limited ability to enter more skilled occupations in the sector.\textsuperscript{82}

The literature review from the six countries suggests that prevalent norms related to traditional female roles and responsibilities at all levels of society, particularly in the home and the family, limit women’s ability to engage in diverse employment opportunities and lead and make decisions in the sector. In some countries, such as China, there is a resurgence in gender-inequitable attitudes insisting that women’s place is in the home and the public domain is male.\textsuperscript{83} This resurgence is in part due to the government’s previous one-child policy, which has influenced the disproportionate


\textsuperscript{77} Asian Development Bank, \textit{Gender Equality in the Labor Market in Cambodia} (ADB, 2013), 13

\textsuperscript{78} MoWA, \textit{Gender Mainstreaming Institutional, Partnership and Policy Context Cambodia Gender Assessment} (MoWA, 2014).

\textsuperscript{79} Asian Development Bank, \textit{Gender Equality in the Labor Market in Cambodia} (ADB, 2013), 13

\textsuperscript{80} Miscalriages are normal but miscarriages caused by detrimental workplace conditions are not “normal.” International Positive Education Network (PEN), \textit{Stories of Women Workers in Vietnam’s Electronics Industry} (Hanoi: PEN, 2017), 6.


\textsuperscript{82} Over the last several years, a range of policies to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women and girls have been developed and implemented. However, these developments are usually not sector specific.

number of men in the country (34 million more men than women). The high sex imbalance and the aging population have prompted the government to encourage women to marry and stay home to care for children and the elderly. Such attitudes may encourage a gendered division of labor and reinforce the unequal status between men and women in the trade sector.

Although the research team did not analyze country- or sector-specific barriers to female entrepreneurship in the region, the information gathered from the literature review provides enough information to draw some conclusions. First, social and cultural expectations and responsibilities can deter or limit women’s ability to become an entrepreneur and achieve success in the chosen business sector. Second, female-owned businesses often struggle with lack of access to information and the complexity of the loan application processes. Across the region, women-owned enterprises lag in formal networking and in their knowledge and use of technology. Even in Thailand, with its greater support for woman-owned businesses, sector-specific gender biases block women from business networking and advancement.

ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES

In Southeast Asia, as in many other parts of the world, SMEs are an important source of innovation, new products, and new services and are an important space for female empowerment. However, although some women in the region own and successfully lead SMEs, their businesses tend to be smaller than male-owned ones (Table 5).

Table 5: Trade: Access and Control over Assets and Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Access and Control over Assets and Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Sixty-five percent of businesses are run by women, but their businesses are “generally smaller, less profitable, and less likely to be registered than male-owned businesses.” Furthermore, many of these businesses and their economic operations are informal, often in situations of “vulnerable employment,” characterized by inadequate earnings, lack of social protection, low productivity, and difficult work conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Women’s disadvantaged status in the labor market exacerbates gender inequalities in access to resources, and the fewer resources wives have relative to their husbands may diminish women’s bargaining power, their ability to push for equality in the family, and their ability to stop childbearing when they don’t want additional children, which may in turn jeopardize women’s careers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

86 Asian Development Bank, Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment in Cambodia.
87 In Phnom Penh, informal occupations include self-operators of moto-taxis and cyclos, street vendors, shoe-shiners, garbage collectors, street-level vehicle mechanics, curbside gasoline sellers, masons, construction workers, handicraft producers, dressmakers or tailors, hairdressers, and domestic workers. Informal occupations in rural areas are centered around agricultural industries as well as non-farm activities. These include fishing, fish processing, mining, spinning and weaving, food processing, home-based apparel making, furniture manufacture, vehicle maintenance/repair, handicraft manufacture, electricity generation, retail trade, construction, and land/water transport. S. Acharya, K. Sedara, S. Chap, and Y. Meach, “Off-Farm and Non-Farm Activities and Employment in Cambodia,” Off-Farm and Non-Farm Employment in South-East Asian Transitional Economies and Thailand (Cambodia: Cambodian Development Resource Institute [CDRI]), 21–92 as cited in Economic Institute of Cambodia, Decent Work in the Informal Economy in Cambodia: A Literature Review (Bangkok: International Labour Office, 2006).
88 Science Daily is an American website that aggregates press releases and publishes lightly edited press releases about science.
89 “China’s Two-Child Policy May Exacerbate Gender Inequality,” Science Daily (February 23, 2018). Available at: www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/02/180223131904.htm
Although almost half of SMEs are owned by women, most of these SMEs are smaller than male-owned ones.\textsuperscript{90}  

Furthermore, female SME owners often lack relevant skills (e.g., financial literacy; networking skills; and sector-specific knowledge, particularly in STEM fields) and managerial experiences and have limited access to trainings and networking opportunities.\textsuperscript{91}  Though there are some exceptions, woman-owned SMEs tend to concentrate in areas traditionally considered feminine, predominantly in the service sector (vendor, restaurant, clothing and tailoring, beauty shops, etc.), whereas male-owned SMEs are more likely to be in manufacturing (including mining and utilities industries).\textsuperscript{92}  This divide often leads to further gender-based marginalization, which in turn results in women lacking relevant knowledge, information, skills, and experiences to compete in segments of the trade sector other than service provision. Furthermore, women lack access to information such as government regulations (registration or required trade documents, for example). Equally important, many woman-owned SMEs face cultural and social barriers, including at the family level. These stem from traditional attitudes around work-life balance: women need to first perform well in the role of mother and wife.\textsuperscript{93}  

Across the region, LGBTI individuals often live with economic insecurity and are at risk of increased violence and other vulnerabilities, including employment discrimination and workplace marginalization (Figure 4).  

**Figure 4: Exclusion of LGBTI Individuals in the Trade Sector**

LGBTI individuals face barriers to full participation in markets and services, including employment opportunities in the trade sector. They experience discrimination and marginalization in the workplace, which affects the type of employment (formal or informal) they obtain and the compensation they receive. Despite decades of impressive economic growth, which has been associated with a reduction in some gender inequalities, LGBTI individuals in Cambodia, particularly transgender, face limited employment opportunities and experience disadvantageous treatment in the labor market.\textsuperscript{91}  In Thailand, a research study found that job application rejection and harassment at work are common forms of discrimination faced by LGBTI individuals.\textsuperscript{92}  As a result of repeated rejections, a hostile work environment, limited freedom of gender expression at work, and limited career advancement opportunities, LGBTI persons opt out of formal jobs in the sector.

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\textsuperscript{91}  USAID, Gender Equality in Renewable Energy, 35

\textsuperscript{92}  USAID, Gender Equality in Renewable Energy.


\textsuperscript{94}  V.S. Salas, An Exploration of Social Exclusion of Lesbians, Gay and Transgender Persons in Families and Communities in some Areas of Cambodia and Their Ways of Coping (Phnom Penh: SPCU-CARD Press, 2013); Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), Discrimination Against Transgender Women in Cambodia’s Urban Centers (Phnom Penh: CCHR, 2016); UNDP and USAID, Being LGBT in Asia: Cambodia Country Report (Bangkok: UNDP and USAID, 2014).

\textsuperscript{95}  World Bank, Economic Inclusion of LGBTI Groups in Thailand (Washington DC: World Bank, 2018).
REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

Southeast Asia is traditionally a producer and exporter of a variety of raw materials and natural resources. All six countries have large rural populations engaged in agricultural, forestry, and fisheries work, and (with the exception of China) are rich in natural resources such as rice, sugar, minerals, and timber. Due to its extremely rapid economic growth, China is experiencing worrying levels of soil degradation, air pollution, desertification, and loss of its biodiversity. Deforestation is a serious issue, especially in Cambodia, China, and Vietnam, where land for agricultural production is scarce. Though China is a world-leading producer in cereal, cotton, and other agricultural products, it has less than ten percent of the world’s arable land (Table 6). In Lao PDR, agriculture is the main source of employment, yet only five percent of the land is arable.

The rich natural resource landscape in Southeast Asia, though, is under significant threat of climate change and the accompanying drastic weather conditions.

Table 6: Trends in Natural Resource Management

### CAMBODIA

Natural resources include forests, waterways, plants, and wildlife, as well as minerals, energy, and extractives. Because of forests’ crucial role in supporting daily life (about 80 percent of Cambodians live in rural areas and depend on forest products) and in mitigating climate change effects, deforestation poses a major threat not only to the land, but also to the livelihoods of about two-thirds of Cambodians that work in agriculture.

### CHINA

China ranks first globally in producing cereal, cotton, and other food products with less than 10 percent of the world’s arable land. Extremely rapid economic growth has caused alarming levels of pollution, threatening the environment and the population’s well-being and livelihoods. China has already experienced biodiversity loss due to deforestation and pollution.

### LAO PDR

Lao PDR relies mainly on subsistence agriculture, with rice as the primary crop. Agriculture is the main source of employment, yet only five percent of the land is arable. Natural resources include tin, gold, gemstones, and gypsum.

### MYANMAR

Natural resources include natural gas; petroleum; timber; and valuable minerals such as gold, tin, rubies and jade, and timber. Forestry engages 13.1 percent of male-headed and female-headed households.

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97 Ibid., 257.
102 P. Zabielskis, “Environmental Problems in China,” 262.
103 2www.laos.opendevelopmentmekog.net/topics/environment
11.3 percent of female-headed households. Forests provide income, shelter, and food security for agricultural communities.

Natural resources such as coal, gold, lead, tin, tungsten, manganese, zinc, and precious stones are important elements of the country’s economic growth and local livelihoods. Thai manufacturing, export, and tourism industries rely heavily on forests, marine environments, and mineral resources. The loss of biodiversity, deforestation, desertification, and pollution are Thailand’s most current and most urgent environmental problems.

According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook, Vietnam’s main natural resources include coal, phosphates, rare earth elements, bauxite, chromate, copper, gold, iron, manganese, silver, zinc, offshore oil and gas deposits, timber, hydropower, and agricultural products (such as rice, coffee, tea, pepper, soybeans, cashews, sugar cane, peanuts, bananas, pork, poultry, and seafood). Climate change effects, including rising sea levels, heavy rains, flash floods, and landslides, are a serious problem, and deforestation, loss of forests, and biodiversity remain an issue.

**ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS**

- Cultural norms and gender stereotypes affect women’s full and equitable involvement in leadership and decision-making processes in the natural resource management sector in all countries. This problem is compounded by the gender-blind nature of the sector’s laws and policies and by discriminatory traditional customs that exclude women from access to and control over assets and resources.
- Women are affected by disruption in the production of natural resources, experiencing, for example, food insecurity. Since women in Southeast Asia often are assigned responsibility for food in the household, food insecurity may heighten their vulnerability to GBV as they are not able to fulfill this responsibility and tensions therefore rise within the household.

**CHALLENGES, INEQUITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT**

**LAWs, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES**

All of the focus countries, except China, are partners in the United Nations (UN) Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries (REDD+). REDD+ aims to mitigate climate change through four areas: forest governance, tenure security, stakeholder engagement, and gender equality. In practice, this means that REDD+ addresses such concepts as social, economic, and cultural inequalities between men and women in forest management and usage, as REDD+ countries have gender disparities in access to political representation, land, and resources (including knowledge and technology) in forest management. The REDD+ program espouses inclusive, fair, and gender-responsive policies to ensure that women are not ignored or marginalized and aims to fully integrate gender equality into REDD+ mitigation actions, realize gender equality provisions in international agreements on REDD+, promote gender mainstreaming in all REDD+ activities, and contribute to Sustainable Development Goal #5 on

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106 Ibid.

107 Open Development. Thailand Country Factsheet 2017. Available at: https://thailand.opendefiomentmekong.net/topics/environment-and-natural-resources/


gender equality. It also aims to increase women’s participation in decision making in natural resource management—important because of the commonly gender-blind formulation and implementation of laws, policies, and programs.

Across the region, structural factors (such as heavy work burdens and lack of cash to travel and spend on trainings) and cultural factors (women should remain within the household) also challenge women’s ability to access sector-specific knowledge and skills through activities such as trainings. Their inability to deal with external shocks such as natural disasters and extreme weather remains an obstacle to their empowerment (Figure 1 Figure 5). Inadequate policies and laws (or inadequate implementation of these) further hinder female empowerment in Southeast Asia.

Figure 5: Lack of Women's Voices in Leadership and Decision Making in Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

The region is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change through exposure to increased floods and droughts among a population with few alternative livelihoods. In climate change mitigation and adaptation, women’s voices are crucial but primarily overlooked. In Lao PDR, women’s needs have not been included in past disaster responses, and the Lao National Adaptation Program of Action and the GoL 2010 Climate Change Strategy do not address them directly. In general, the most disadvantaged households are in areas that are vulnerable to natural disasters, include a large number of dependents, and are headed by women. In Myanmar, as in Lao PDR and Vietnam, women aretraditionally excluded from community decision making and political activities. In Thailand, despite the government’s commitment to promote gender equality, women’s decision making and representation in leadership positions in the forestry and water sectors remain low.


CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS

Patriarchal cultural norms and beliefs constitute barriers to women’s empowerment in Southeast Asia. These cultural norms create a gender imbalance in natural resource management. For instance, in many of the countries, including Cambodia, natural resource management professions such as forestry are perceived as suitable for men only, and women are still only minimally involved in decision-making processes. In Thailand, the masculine culture of the natural resource management sector excludes women’s voices and overlooks women’s role in water security and management. Women are considered less competent, lacking in technical skills, and inferior leaders. In Vietnam, similarly, traditional practices that do not recognize women’s rights, contributions, or voices reinforce cultural stereotypes.

114 https://land-links.org/country-profile/thailand/1528837614300-f6c5e3f3-05a5
115 Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN), the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Women’s Inclusion in REDD+ in Cambodia: Lessons from Good Practices in Forest, Agriculture, and Other Natural Resource Management Sectors (WOCAN, UN-REDD, and USAID, 2013).
that women are incapable of basic decisions surrounding where they live and, by extension, the use of surrounding natural resources.\textsuperscript{117}

**GENDER ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TIME USE**

Women in Southeast Asia are largely responsible for taking care of the family, including preparing food, fetching water, and managing household chores, while contributing large amounts of time to agricultural production.\textsuperscript{118} They are also heavily involved in forestry-related activities, and can make significant contributions to natural resource management (Table 7).

However, women’s access to and control over assets and resources in the sector is constrained, with adverse consequences. In all countries analyzed, inadequate, limited, or lack of access to clean drinking water, particularly in rural areas, becomes a time and labor challenge for many women, who are forced to travel long distances to fetch water.

**Table 7: Natural Resource Management: Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAMBODIA</td>
<td>Women can spend up to three hours a day getting water from remote areas, which limits their ability to engage in paid work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYANMAR</td>
<td>Women traditionally collect mushrooms, wild fruits, nuts, wild vegetables, medicinal herbs, and many other forest products. Women’s lack of knowledge of legal access rights and permissions can lead to confrontation with government authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THAILAND</td>
<td>Women’s limited participation in water management (including lack of access to safe water and clean sanitation) places enormous burdens on women’s time and energy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES AND PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION MAKING**

Across the region, women’s access to and control over assets and resources and patterns of power and decision making in natural resource management are not equal to those of men. A range of socioeconomic, social, and structural factors create and sustain an environment in which, on average, women in Southeast Asia own fewer and smaller land parcels than men (Table 8).


\textsuperscript{118} S. Akter, “Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equity in Agriculture: a Different Perspective from Southeast Asia,” Food Policy Vol. 69, May 2017, pg 270-279.


\textsuperscript{120} Kachin women, for example, do not have the right to a land ownership certificate. If a woman’s husband dies, the family inheritance, including land tenure rights, is passed on to the eldest son. Please see NORAD and RECOFTC, Social and Gender Equity Issues in Forestry and REED+ in Myanmar, Discussion Paper (Bangkok, Thailand: RECOFTC, 2015).

Table 8: Natural Resource Management: Access and Patterns of Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAMBODIA</td>
<td>Because women own fewer plots than men, they have limited ability to grow diverse crops to minimize external shocks from natural disasters or climate change. Patriarchal cultures throughout the region influence patterns of power and decision making in relation to land use. Only 31 percent of female-headed households have access to a plow, compared with 48 percent of male-headed households, with many lacking the equipment to effectively use their land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAO PDR</td>
<td>Primarily male-dominated ministries often discriminate against women in granting land rights, even in matriarchal communities, and require only male signatures when both names of spouses are listed on land certificates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYANMAR</td>
<td>Stark discrimination persists, where even the government is biased toward issuing land ownership documentation to men (who are considered household heads by the state). This makes women economically vulnerable, because land ownership may be one of the only ways of breaking the cycle of poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIETNAM</td>
<td>The Land Law provides for equal land rights, and recent efforts to ensure the inclusion of both men's and women's names on land deeds are encouraging. However, women's general lack of awareness of property rights laws and lack of resources to enforce them at the provincial level continue to challenge female empowerment. Men benefit more than women from technological and machinery-related advances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women and men in Southeast Asia also experience inequality in access to information and knowledge to manage natural resources. Across the region, women are disadvantaged in the use of available technology. In some countries, for example, men are more likely than women to own tractors and other machines that enable more efficient usage of agricultural land. This disparity leads to unequal agricultural yields and time usage between men and women, exacerbating economic and social inequalities. Women have less access to agricultural training programs than men, reducing their decision-making power, leadership, and ability to participate effectively in the sector.

This analysis did not cover more recent technology such as e-payments, microfinancing for women in agriculture, or use of social media to connect or promote small businesses (partially due to the lack of available data); however, one can assume that social media, which has among the highest number of users in the region (according to the Bangkok Post, Thailand ranks among the top 10 countries in Facebook users worldwide), could promote women's agricultural businesses. Likewise, a thorough analysis of the usage of e-payments and how this technological development protects female market vendors from theft or violence or contributes to their empowerment would be very useful. More research is needed on the use and influence of social media and other technologics.

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124 As noted by the first Female Farmer Forum in July 2016. Gender equality issues in land governance were also recognized in the National Land Use Policy; however, the Social Safeguards ASA Report notes that the provisions for gender equality are likely ineffective or diluted.
129 FAO/SIDA. *National Gender Profile of Agricultural Households*, 2010.
technology in women’s economic and social empowerment and how to harness the traditional knowledge of natural resources held by women as part of the effort toward women’s empowerment.

Agriculture, as part of the natural resource management sector, is an important part of the region’s socioeconomic and cultural landscape. However, gender inequalities persist, including the gender gap in earnings for agricultural labor. This is an important factor in slowing down female empowerment in all six countries analyzed. For instance, in Myanmar, despite the government’s commitments to ensure equal pay for work of equal value, women earn approximately 20 percent less per day than men.

131 Please see Article 350 of the Constitution. https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Myanmar_2008
132 Belton et al., Rural Transformation in Central Myanmar: Results from the Rural Economy and Agriculture Dry Zone Community Survey (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 2017).
REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN HEALTH

OVERVIEW

All six countries have made commitments to HIV/AIDS prevention and response that have led to an average decline in the overall prevalence rate. China has committed to HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention through its 2003 Four Free and One Care Policy. Currently, 99 percent of its cases are treated with domestic funding. Cambodia has achieved universal access for HIV treatment. Myanmar has also reduced HIV prevalence over the years, although the HIV prevalence is the fourth highest among Asian and Pacific countries and still higher than average when compared with other countries in South and Southeast Asia. Thailand, for instance, is the first country in the region to reduce its mother-to-child-transmission rate from 13.6 percent in 2003 to 1.1 percent in 2015.

Despite these advances, HIV/AIDS is still a major public health concern across the region. Southeast Asia has the largest number (in absolute terms) of people living with HIV, with Thailand home to approximately nine percent of the region’s HIV-positive people. Furthermore, in some of the focus countries, the HIV epidemic has shifted.

Table 9: HIV Trends

| CAMBODIA | The HIV epidemic remains concentrated among certain populations at higher risk of HIV infection: entertainment workers (EWs), men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender persons (TG), and people who inject drugs (PWID); however, women represent a growing proportion of the people living with HIV. |
| CHINA | The infection has shifted from high-risk intravenous drug users in the southwestern province to the general population. |
| LAO PDR | Key affected populations are MSM and female sex workers, with PWID as negligible. In recent years, young persons with the disease have been overwhelmingly female (61 percent) compared with the affected older population, which is primarily male. |

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138 EWs are defined as women or girls who exchange sexual services for money or goods, either regularly or occasionally, where the sex worker may not consciously define such activity as income-generating. Entertainment establishments include but are not limited to karaoke, massage, beer promotion, beer garden, and freelance; however, currently there is no standardized definition. UNAIDS.


The epidemic remains concentrated in certain populations, particularly among PWID, MSM, and women in the sex sector.\textsuperscript{143,144}

Thailand is the first country in the Asia Pacific region to effectively eliminate mother-to-child-transmission, with a rate of 1.9 percent in 2015.\textsuperscript{145} Despite this important milestone, HIV/AIDS remains a critical challenge, especially among the LGBTI community and young women.\textsuperscript{146}

HIV/AIDS is a growing problem, notably for women.\textsuperscript{147} Although new infections are declining, “a substantial proportion is now occurring among women in intimate partnerships with men living with HIV.”\textsuperscript{148} although primarily affecting men through needle transmission and MSM.

In all focus countries except Cambodia, where morbidity and mortality due to malaria remain high compared with other countries in the region,\textsuperscript{149} malaria rates are on the decline. In China, the annual incidence of malaria has declined significantly from the 1990s, and the disease is nearly eliminated.\textsuperscript{150} Myanmar’s malaria morbidity and mortality rates have also declined, and the disease is 90 percent contained throughout the country.\textsuperscript{151} Vietnam is poised to transfer from control to elimination status.\textsuperscript{152} However, despite the good news, challenges persist and new trends emerge. For instance, across all six focus countries, sex-disaggregated data on malaria infections and other pandemic threats are not available, making it difficult to identify gender-specific advances or constraints to female empowerment. Some populations—particularly pregnant women and children, mobile and migrant populations (MMPs), and cross-border communities—are at greater risk of infection than others. Neither gendered concerns nor specific populations are explicitly addressed at the policy level across the region, though some programs and interventions, mostly implemented by local community-based or civil society organizations, are in place. Resistance to malaria drugs remains a regional concern.

**ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS**

- Driven by harmful social norms and cultural taboos—particularly, subordinate social status and relative lack of power to negotiate safer sex—women and girls, including lesbian and TG women, are at high risk of HIV infection and represent a growing proportion of the people living with HIV across the region.
- Laws, policies, and regulations addressing the HIV epidemic are not gender transformative or even gender responsive, although many have integrated women-focused policies into

\textsuperscript{144} The National AIDS Programme for Myanmar, in its Global AIDS Response Report 2010–2011, noted the steepest decline of HIV transmission in sex work and among regular partners. The decline in male-to-male sex was much less pronounced. New infections through contaminated injecting equipment are expected to become an increasingly important proportion of total new infections.
\textsuperscript{145} UNAIDS Data Bank, 2017. Available at: http://aidsinfo.unaids.org/
\textsuperscript{149} S. Canavati et al., “Strategy To Address Migrant And Mobile Populations for Malaria Elimination In Cambodia,” MMP Strategy (March 2013).
national frameworks, leading to lower access to sexual health and legal services for people living with HIV and most-at-risk populations.

- Not all women and girls in Southeast Asia enjoy equal access to health, particularly those with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (SOGIE). Minority ethnic groups and poor and rural women face barriers in access to HIV treatment and care.
- Social practices, including division of labor, are influenced by inequitable gender norms and attitudes, which put men and women at a differential risk of malarial and other pandemic threats. The trend increases the burden of the disease among some populations, particularly pregnant women and MMPs. Furthermore, a cultural script about masculinity that tells men to be self-reliant results in men being less likely to seek preventative care.

**CHALLENGES, INEQUITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT**

**CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS**

Women and girls, including lesbian and TG women, are at high risk of HIV infection and represent a growing proportion of the people living with HIV across the region. Women’s greater biological susceptibility to infection and their subordinate status and relative lack of power to negotiate safer sex contribute to high HIV infections (Figure 7).153 Across the region, traditional gender norms related to women’s sexuality, taboos around discussing sexuality and female sexual behavior, unequal power and gender dynamics, and sociocultural barriers to accessing comprehensive family planning increase the risk of new HIV infections among females.154 In addition, GBV is a risk factor for HIV infection (for more information on GBV and STIs, please refer to Annex II). Harmful social norms that condone violence against women therefore are detrimental to female empowerment in this area. Cultural taboos around women’s agency when it comes to sex may also hamper women’s abilities to negotiate safe sex—e.g., women are supposed to remain passive and are perceived as innocent and not knowledgeable, whereas men are expected to lead in sexual matters.155

**LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES THAT INFLUENCE THE CONTEXT IN WHICH MEN AND WOMEN ACT AND MAKE DECISIONS**

The six focus countries lack laws, policies, and regulations addressing the HIV epidemic that are gender transformative or even gender responsive, although many have integrated women-focused policies into national frameworks. Institutional practices that influence the context of HIV prevention and response in the region are often gender blind and, in some cases, gender discriminatory, particularly against members of the LGBTI population and sex workers.

- In **China**, inadequate laws on sexuality, lack of sex education, and attitudinal discrimination against LGBTIs and HIV reinforce traditional gender roles and responsibilities. Women are

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153 UNDP, Gender and HIV. Cambodia Gender Assessment Policy Brief 6 (Phnom Penh: UNDP, 2014).
154 Based on review of country gender assessments from UNDP and ADB
more vulnerable to discrimination because of their traditional roles as mothers to children and as pregnant women.\textsuperscript{156}

- In Cambodia, not all HIV prevention and response policies are informed by gender equality and human rights principles. This, in turn, exaggerates obstacles to female empowerment.

- In Lao PDR, despite the government’s stated commitment to gender equality in HIV prevention and treatment through its 2010 Law on HIV/AIDS Control and Prevention and National Strategic Action Plan 2016–2020, the law does not extend the access to prevention, treatment, care, and support services for sex workers because sex work is illegal and regarded as a crime.\textsuperscript{157}

- In Vietnam, current laws and strategies to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic are gender blind. For instance, Vietnam’s 2006 law on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control and its 2016 Strategy do not address the gender inequities of the disease when it disproportionately affects women and girls.\textsuperscript{158}

Collectively, the lack of a gender-transformative perspective in health policies, in addition to women’s restricted social autonomy, as well as the marginalization and discrimination of the LGBTI community, is “directly linked to lower access to sexual health services, including HIV testing and treatment.”\textsuperscript{159}

Furthermore, considering the marginalized or hidden nature of these groups in many societies, services for HIV/AIDS prevention or treatment are not always provided and are often inadequately resourced.

Figure 8: Addressing Violence against Women to Achieve Gender-Transformative Outcomes for Women’s Health and Empowerment in Lao PDR

Stemming from positive changes in the policy environment in Lao PDR, particularly in the context of recent legal reform, the government has been eager to accelerate progress on eliminating violence against women over the past few years. Several laws and policies have been introduced, such as the National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children (2014–2020)\textsuperscript{160} and the Law on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children (2015). Article 2 of the Law on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children defines VAW as “any behavior that results in or is likely to result in danger, harm, physical, psychological, sexual, property or economic suffering to women and children.”

Given the stark correlation between negative health outcomes (such as HIV and mental health issues) and violence against women, these laws and policies have a potentially transformative effect for women’s health and empowerment in Lao PDR, if implemented correctly. During 2018, the Ministry of Justice in Lao PDR partnered with UN Women and the Government of Korea in order to work with village-level justice actors to implement the Law on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children (2015). They did this by training village-level justice actors in how to respond more effectively to women seeking help after having experienced violence, giving them information and options, increasing their chances of exiting and recovering from a violent relationship. In turn, this decreases their exposure to HIV and other STDs and decreases their exposure to further traumatization through violence.

There is also a lack of formal legal aid and legal assistance services for people living with HIV and most-at-risk populations, which further prevents those in need from seeking services and making informed decisions about their health.

**UNEQUAL PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION MAKING THAT LEAD TO CHALLENGES IN ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES**

Risk factors for increased vulnerability to HIV infections among females, LGBTI persons, and minority groups vary by region. Not all women and girls in Southeast Asia enjoy equal access to health care, particularly those with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (SOGIE). Across the region, women, including women from minority ethnic groups and poor and rural women, face barriers to access to HIV treatment and care.

Globally, patriarchy and unequal gender and power dynamics that deprive females and other groups of decision-making power are a risk factor in exposure to HIV. This, in turn, influences how and to what extent these individuals access and utilize HIV and other sexual health–related resources and services. In a relationship, financial disparities and intimate partner violence can often hinder a woman’s ability to negotiate safe sex.163

Stigma and cultural taboos around discussing sexuality, particularly female sexuality and sexual behavior, are a risk factor for HIV infection among women across the Southeast Asian region. The regional analysis confirms this trend in Myanmar, where social stigma associated with openly discussing sexual behavior strongly discourages women from speaking with their male partners or other family members regarding sexual matters, including the use of condoms. This has potentially adverse consequences for women and girls’ health and well-being.164 Thailand’s surveillance data show an increase in the level of HIV/AIDS infection among young women ages 20–24, including young pregnant women.165 A part of the problem lies in women’s limited negotiating power for safe sex, as perception of trust in male’s fidelity is undermined. Furthermore, in Thailand, social stigma and discrimination based on HIV status remain some of the most powerful barriers to gender-equitable HIV response. A regional trend is that women, generally, lack knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS, which impacts their vulnerability to HIV infections (Table 10).

Economic status and poverty level, SOGIE, and experience of sexual exploitation, trafficking of persons, and migration in search of work increase the vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, particularly among women and girls.

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162 UN Women, Training of Village Mediation Units (VMUs) on Violence Against Women in Lao PDR (UN Women, forthcoming).
163 Gender Inequality and HIV | AVERT. https://www.avert.org/professionals/social-issues/gender-inequality
Table 10: Knowledge and Power for Safe Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vietnam</th>
<th>Lao PDR</th>
<th>Myanmar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Vietnam, cultural norms and beliefs related to sexuality and unequal power relations based on male dominance discourage visits to health clinics, including for treatment and HIV testing.</td>
<td>In Lao PDR, female sex workers’ low social status in relationships is a barrier in negotiating condom use. Also, women and girls are increasingly exposed to HIV/AIDS due to lack of knowledge of its transmission modes and health consequences.</td>
<td>In Myanmar, limited knowledge among adolescents regarding infection avoidance is a factor for HIV infections among females.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIV/AIDS is a critical challenge for the LGBTI community in all six focus countries, especially among MSM and TG individuals, who are particularly vulnerable to HIV transmission. Furthermore, across the region, LGBTI individuals face discrimination and structural and social stigma in access to comprehensive HIV/AIDS care and treatment services. Available regional research evidence points out that LGBTI individuals in Cambodia, China, and Thailand face discrimination and stigma, including in access to HIV treatment. The same stigma extends to other markets, services, and spaces, including the workplace.170

Figure 9: Work-Related Discrimination of People Living with HIV in Thailand

Work-related discrimination, social exclusion, and harassment disproportionately affect people living with HIV (PLHIV). As part of the global PLHIV Stigma Index Survey, the Thai Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (TNPI) conducted a survey with 233 HIV-positive persons in 2009.172 The 2009 survey results show that 26 percent reported having been excluded from social gatherings (compared with 31 percent in Myanmar, 11 percent in the Philippines, 10 percent in Sri Lanka, 5 percent in China, and 4 percent in Cambodia), primarily due to HIV status. The minority of PLHIV in the survey also reported being excluded due to sexual orientation or being sex workers or injected drug users. The main stigma experienced by Thai respondents was through gossip, followed by physical assaults.173


166 USAID/Vietnam, Gender Analysis (USAID, 2012), 17.
170 Markets (housing, labor, and credit), services (e.g., health and education services that enhance human capital), and spaces (e.g., physical spaces that have a social, political, economic, and cultural character) are three domains representing both barriers to and opportunities for social inclusion. Please see World Bank, Inclusion Matters: The Foundation for Shared Prosperity (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2013).
Another important obstacle to female empowerment in the health sector across the region is the poor management of health systems; overall, high out-of-pocket health expenses and the low level of public spending on health, including HIV prevention among key populations, jeopardize empowerment. According to Thailand’s 2013 National AIDS Spending Assessment, 89 percent of all funding for HIV that year went to treatment, support, and clinical care. In contrast, only 3.6 percent of all expenditures were devoted to key population prevention and to HIV testing and counselling, combined. These further exacerbate and perhaps stimulate challenges, inequalities, and obstacles to female empowerment.

GENDER ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TIME USE INFLUENCE PATTERNS IN MALARIA INFECTIONS AND SUSCEPTIBILITY TO EMERGING PANDEMIC THREATS

In Southeast Asia, despite the steady reduction of malaria incidence and mortality in recent years, malaria remains a public health concern (Figure 10). In some countries, such as Cambodia, morbidity and mortality due to malaria remain high compared with other countries in the region.174

Malaria infections and emerging pandemic threats display some gender-differential patterns and susceptibility. Social practices such as division of labor, arising from inequitable gender norms and attitudes, put men and women at a differential risk of malarial infection. In Myanmar and Lao PDR, women are more prone to malaria exposure as their household duties require them to be outside during peak biting periods (early morning and evening).175,176 Men are also susceptible if they work in forests and mines or migrate to epidemic regions for work.177 Furthermore, this trend increases the burden of the disease among some populations: although both men and women continue to be at risk, pregnant women and MMPs are particularly vulnerable. In Thailand, women’s choices of antimalarial drugs during pregnancy are limited because, although the range of available antimalarials has grown steadily over the past 50 years, relatively few of these drugs have proven safe and efficacious in pregnancy.178

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171 Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP), International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW Global); International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); UNAIDS: People living with HIV stigma index, Asia Pacific regional analysis 2011. The report combines nine country studies from the Asia-Pacific region, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, to compare regional standardized HIV-related stigma indicators.


173 The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, Regional Operational Plan 2016 FY17 Strategic Direction Summary 2 (May 2016).


Particularly in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Thailand, MMPs are especially vulnerable to malaria infection because of their lack of routine health care and their location outside malaria control areas. In Vietnam, malaria remains prevalent in mountainous, remote, and poor areas, especially where ethnic minorities reside. It is also prevalent in large construction camps with static communities and in transient worker populations. There is no gender analysis of malaria trends among these populations; however, men are more likely to travel to various agricultural/construction sites and thus are more likely to be at risk of infection. Yet despite respective governments’ commitments to eliminate the disease, malaria among pregnant women and MMPs in the six focus countries has not been specifically addressed. The regional analysis did not identify any specific health policy developments on malaria treatment among these populations.

Although not equally across all six countries, patterns of exposure coincide with gender norms and behaviors, and men’s and women’s activities put them at a differential risk for other pandemic threats. In Lao PDR, for instance, the well-defined gender norms that reinforce women’s roles and responsibilities, particularly those related to division of leisure and/or labor, are a risk factor for pandemic threats. The predominance of women in small poultry farms increases their vulnerability to avian influenza as women are the primary subsistence farmers.

182 For instance, China aims to eliminate malaria by 2020 (WHO, China Fact Sheet 2018. Eliminating the Disease throughout China by 2020. http://www.wpro.who.int/china/mediacentre/factsheets/malaria/en/). Thailand is aiming for malaria-free status by 2025; however, growing resistance to malaria drugs remains a concern.
183 P. Hamade and M. Feldman, “Rapid Assessment of Malaria in Pregnancy in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region Cambodia, Thailand and Myanmar (Burma),” Malaria Consortium (March 2013).
184 Lao PDR has a large poultry population, of which smallholder farmers own 80 percent. There is an increasing awareness of the dangers of infectious diseases such as avian influenza; however, the country struggles to control the problem as it imports large numbers of poultry from neighboring countries, including Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam (WHO, Lao PDR Avian Influenza http://www.wpro.who.int/laos/topics/avian_influenza/en/).
REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND CONFLICT

OVERVIEW

Southeast Asia is marked by ethnic and religious conflicts (Table 1.1), such as the push for greater autonomy among the Malayan Muslim majority in Thailand’s Deep South and the persecution of the predominantly Muslim Rohingya in Myanmar.\(^{185}\) Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam share historical legacies from the Vietnam War (1955–75)—all three countries have regimes that do not allow press freedom or human rights activism and severely restrict freedom of assembly, making protests potential conflicts. Although violent extremism and terrorism are not reported as an issue, these countries suffer from political tensions and deepening social divisions.\(^{186, 187}\) In Lao PDR, tensions with anti-communist Hmong ethnic groups remain.

Although incidents that may be classified as terrorism have occurred in Thailand (such as the bombing at a famous religious shrine in Bangkok in 2015\(^{188}\)), terrorism in a more organized and targeted form seems to be an issue mainly in China, which is experiencing a conflict with the Uighurs, a Turkic minority ethnic group residing in the far-west province of Xinjiang.\(^{189, 190}\) Other points of conflict in China are related to freedom of expression and human rights activism, which is heavily suppressed by the government; just as in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam, China represses any sign of dissent, with recent reports indicating that President Xi Jinping and the Party are becoming even more vigilant, increasing the president’s power.\(^{191}\)

\(^{185}\) Although most of the political violence in Myanmar arises from conflicts between the military and the many ethnic armed organizations in the country, interethnic conflict has risen in recent years, including the Rohingya conflict and the resulting refugee crisis. The Rohingya conflict has triggered concerns about attracting transnational terrorist activity to Myanmar. “One of Asia’s hottest markets could become a new home for …” https://finance.yahoo.com/news/one-asia-aapos-hottest-markets-052543055.html


\(^{188}\) Please see “Bangkok Bomb: Thai Capital Reeling after Deadliest Attack in Years,” The Guardian (August 17, 2015), Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/17/bangkok-bomb-thai-capital-reels-deadliest-attack-in-years

\(^{189}\) Combating Terrorism Centre, “The Seven Stages of Terrorism in China.” https://ctc.usma.edu/the-seventh-stage-of-terrorism-in-china/

\(^{190}\) In October 2013, an Uighur man drove an explosive-laden car, carrying his wife and mother, into a crowd in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, a technique like those used in many Islamist-motivated terrorist attacks in Europe (Combating Terrorism Centre, “The Seven Stages of Terrorism in China,” https://ctc.usma.edu/the-seventh-stage-of-terrorism-in-china/). There have been Uighur separatists identified in China with possible links to the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (UK Government 2018, https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/china/terrorism); however, the Chinese government’s response toward the minority has been harsh, with violent crackdowns on the population, of which thousands are now in detention camps and used as forced labor in factories (C. Buckley and R. Austin, “China’s Detention Camps for Muslims Turn to Forced Labor,” The New York Times (December 16, 2018). https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/16/world/asia/xinjiang-china-forced-labor-camps-uighurs.html). A religious and cultural struggle lies at the core of this conflict, in which the Chinese government would like to see the Uighurs assimilate with the rest of the population, giving up their culture and religion (K. Abramson, “Gender, Yighur Identity, and the Story of Nuzugum,” Journal of Asian Studies 21(4): 1069–1091.

Table 11: Trends in Violent Extremism and Conflict

CAMBODIA

Cambodia experiences rising political tensions and deepening social divisions, a result of the historical legacy of past wars, the Khmer Rouge regime, and economic challenges in the globalized world. There are no reports of violent extremism or transnational terrorists currently operating in Cambodia.

There is a conflict with the Uighur minority in China, and terrorist attacks by Uighurs have occurred. The government has reacted with a violent crackdown on the Uighur Muslim minority, using waterboarding and other types of torture as interrogation techniques, and has detained hundreds of thousands of Uighurs in camps and used them as forced labor in factories. Generally, China represses any signs of dissent; there have also been incidents of Christians detained for “inciting to subvert state power.” Furthermore, human rights activists and journalists remain vulnerable to retaliation by the state.

Legacies of the Vietnam War and the secret bombing of Laos have not disappeared, with huge numbers of unexploded ordnances (UXOs) remaining in the country. Although violent extremism has not been identified as an issue, conflict surrounding the war and its aftermath, particularly with the anti-communist and U.S.-supported Hmong ethnic group, remains active.

Most of the political violence in Myanmar arises from conflicts between the military and ethnic armed organizations, but interethnic conflict has also risen in recent years, including the Rohingya conflict and the Rohingya refugee crisis. There are no reports of transnational terrorists operating in Myanmar; however, there are fears that the instability brought about through the Rohingya crisis could provide fertile ground for transnational terror groups to begin operating and recruiting in the country.

A violent conflict is ongoing in Thailand’s Deep South, which has a Malay Muslim majority, stemming primarily from long-standing tensions with the nation-state. The conflict presents profound challenges to the social and economic development of this region, and the Thai government has initiated exploratory peace talks, with limited progress to date. Thailand also experiences sharp political divisions between political parties that have led to general unrest and to the military coups in 2006 and 2014.

Vietnam’s government holds very tight reins on protest and extremism. The Vietnam war is still looming in the background, as the chemical Agent Orange continues to haunt the population; it was sprayed in vast quantities across the jungle to target the Vietcong and is still causing illness and mental and physical disability.

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194 C. Buckley and R. Austin, “China’s Detention Camps for Muslims Turn to Forced Labor.”
199 Between the so-called “red shirts’’ and “yellow shirts,’’ the former leaning leftwards on the political spectrum, and the latter tending to be royalists and leaning more to the right.
200 M. Igoe, “The Legacy of Agent Orange in Vietnam.”
ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS

- Patriarchal social structures and well-defined, rigid gender norms hamper women’s greater formal, political, and decision-making role in conflict resolution and peace-building processes, and traditional cultural biases and weak implementation of relevant legal frameworks undermine women’s voice and agency and leadership within the sector.

- Women (and men) are affected by extremism and conflict issues in a differential way, but women are particularly vulnerable to violence and trafficking and their access to and control over assets and resources are further jeopardized.

- Social markers such as age, ethnicity, and SOGIE, in addition to gender, affect how violent extremism and conflict are experienced and the extent of participation and decision making in peace processes and conflict resolution.

CHALLENGES, INEQUALITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES THAT INFLUENCE THE CONTEXT IN WHICH MEN AND WOMEN ACT AND MAKE DECISIONS

The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 is the first resolution to comprehensively address the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and girls. UNSCR 1325 calls specifically for “the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, including in emergency and humanitarian situations, such as in refugee camps,” and for improving intervention strategies in the prevention of violence against women, which is exacerbated during conflicts.201 UN Women reports that “women’s meaningful participation in peace processes increases the likelihood that an agreement will last longer than 15 years by as much as 35 percent.”202

None of the six focus countries has a national action plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).203 Some engagement by the Southeast Asian countries on WPS has been shown, however, and China recently participated in the WPS Open Debate, although the country made no commitments to implement the WPS agenda.204 The same applies to Vietnam and Lao PDR.205

- In Myanmar, the government has not implemented the gender quota in peace negotiations, as mandated by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and women’s low participation in the peace process challenges female empowerment in the country.206

- In Thailand, women’s leadership is missing in securing peace in Thailand’s southern border provinces,207 and lack of female representation in religious institutions is a significant obstacle to addressing social issues such as rape, sexual harassment, and domestic violence.208

201 United States Institute for Peace on UNSCR 1325, available at: https://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325
203 See: Peace Women and their list of signatory Member States: https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states
204 Peace Women has reported on the debates on their website at: https://www.peacewomen.org/profile/country-region-profile-china
205 http://www.peacewomen.org/member-states
208 Important religious institutions include the Sheikhul Islam Office, the Central Islamic Council of Thailand, and local Islamic committees in the Deep South. Sheikhul Islam Office is the office of Chula Ratchamontri, Thailand’s most senior Islamic spiritual leader, appointed by the king.
CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS; INCLUDING GENDER ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TIME USE

In Southeast Asia, patriarchal norms still dictate the roles that women and men play in society, and this holds true for gender trends in violent extremism and conflict. In all six countries, women’s role in peace and security processes remains marginal, with a slight exception in Cambodia where women, although often informally, have played important roles in peace-building and conflict resolution processes. For example, in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge, women were behind a nationwide literacy campaign, cared for thousands of war orphans, and helped develop a nationwide system of cooperatives to regenerate local social and economic activity. Yet only a very few became active in formal politics, including conflict resolution and peace-building processes.

The reasons behind women’s unequal participation and representation in political processes are gendered norms that situate women’s roles predominantly within their homes and family realms in the six countries, whereas politics and decision making are a largely male-dominated sphere. Even when women hold decision-making positions, traditional cultural biases may undermine women’s voice and agency. The Khmer cultural identity of Cambodia; China’s long history of gender inequality; Myanmar’s, Thailand’s, and Lao PDR’s gendered social norms; and the Confucian ideals surrounding gender in Vietnam all undermine women’s agency and act as obstacles and challenges to female empowerment in the sector (Figure 11).

A range of factors, including gender, ethnicity, age, and occupational group, may affect how men and women experience conflict, and the regional analysis clearly indicates the differential impact that conflict has on men and women. This is because women and men are assigned different roles to play in society, often disadvantageous for women, and consequently, they occupy different spaces within it. One study cited by the Governance and Social Development Resource Center (GSDRC) found that “conflict reduces women’s life expectancy disproportionately to men’s, because women are more affected by the indirect effects of economic change (e.g., increases in food prices), displacement, and sexual violence — and consequently the risk of HIV/AIDS.” Many women are left widowed and many children are orphaned. Importantly, conflict makes violence against women worse; women and girls become exposed to higher levels of rape, sexual violence, domestic violence, labor exploitation, and trafficking during times of conflict and war. In Thailand’s Deep South, women experience a higher percentage (80 percent) of deaths from separatist violence, since a significant number of women are

209 USAID, Women’s Leadership as a Route to Greater Empowerment. Cambodia Case Study (Washington, DC: USAID, 2014).
210 Literature does not provide a clear answer to what led Cambodian women to play an important role in peace building and conflict resolution relative to the other conflicts in the region. Some sources suggest that the influx of NGO support with women’s agendas supported their increased participation in peacebuilding. Cambodia. Accord 5, 1998. “Safeguarding Peace: Cambodia’s Constitutional Challenge.” Available at: https://www.c-r.org/downloads/AccordInsight_WomenBuildingPeace_Cambodia.pdf
212 See, for example, the GDSR website for this topic: https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/gender-and-conflict/relationship-between-gender-and-conflict-the-evidence/impact-of-conflict-on-gender/
213 Ibid.
killed by bomb explosions in public spaces, and other incidents of violence.\textsuperscript{215} Men would, on the other hand, be more directly involved in the execution of violent acts, in which they may become injured, suffer post-traumatic stress, or die. In other words, women are more affected indirectly by conflict settings, whereas men are involved in its more direct consequences.

ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES AND PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION MAKING

Women belonging to minorities are especially disempowered when it comes to access to and control over assets and resources, leadership, and power and decision making in the sector.

- In Myanmar, there is evidence of trafficking of women and girls to China; according to news sources, more than 7,000 women and girls have been sent to China and forced into marriage and childbirth.\textsuperscript{216} Research suggests that Rohingya women (and children) have been made extremely vulnerable through their displacement, experiencing violence and being targeted by traffickers (mostly in Bangladesh).\textsuperscript{217} The underlying reason is the ethno-religious conflict, displacing men, women, and children and making them vulnerable to criminal networks and exploitation.

- Uighur women in China have been targeted as slave labor and for sexual exploitation, often resulting in their rejection by their communities and inability to return because of stigma related to prostitution, thus being disempowered twice.\textsuperscript{218}

In both countries, government discrimination or bias against these minorities plays an important role in depriving these women of their voices. The same is true in Lao PDR for Hmong women, some of whom are hiding from government troops with their families in the jungle, where they are experiencing extreme conditions during pregnancy, labor, and nursing. Without access to medical care or medicines, they suffer from high maternal and child mortality rates. Obstacles like these challenge women’s ability to control the outcomes of their lives and health, as well as their ability to hold power and make decisions concerning their lives, their communities, and their countries.\textsuperscript{219}

Women’s growing participation in a Buddhist Nationalist organization in Myanmar, MaBaTha, has provided cover for fanning the flames of discrimination against Rohingya, especially those in camps. Buddhist women have led movements to prevent vital assistance to Muslim women (particularly pregnant women) on the claim that it is not necessary. Women have also led protests against NGOs supporting education, hygiene, and sanitation services to women. According to authors who observed this movement, it offers opportunities that women do not have in other aspects of their lives—at home and within professional institutions. Although these women insist that their motives are feminist, they support race and religion laws that discriminate against Muslims and plan to oppose upcoming laws prohibiting violence against women because they don’t prohibit polygamy.\textsuperscript{220}

Across the region, social markers such as age, ethnicity, and SOGIE status, in addition to gender, play a role in the extent to which women and men access and control assets and resources and/or participate in leadership and decision making. The lack of literature and stigma across the region

\textsuperscript{215} The Asia Foundation, Understanding Violence in Southeast Asia (Yangon: The Asia Foundation, 2016).
\textsuperscript{217} U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2018).
\textsuperscript{218} K. Abramson, “Gender, YiGHur Identity, and the Story of Nuzugum.”
\textsuperscript{219} A notable exception is an ethnic Hmong woman, Pany Yathotou, who has held powerful governmental positions including Governor of the Bank of the Lao P.D.R. and is currently the President of the National Assembly. It is not a given, however, that one woman’s success transforms the landscape for other women and, in the case of Laos, the number of women in political leadership positions is low.
toward LGBTI individuals suggests that LGBTI individuals have been excluded from meaningful participation in peace processes and conflict resolution.

REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

OVERVIEW

Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam share important traits in trafficking in persons (Table 12). By United States Department of State rankings, Cambodia, China, and Thailand are source, transit, and destination countries for forced labor, sex trafficking, forced and sham marriages, and domestic servitude, as well as illegal adoption and other forms of trafficking. Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam are still primarily source countries for trafficking victims, although victims are also increasingly trafficked to these countries. In all countries, victims are sometimes also trafficked within national borders for a local market. Country-specific trends depend on sociocultural, economic, geographical, and historical conditions.

The scale of the problem is difficult to assess, as official data are limited, but hundreds of cases are reported to justice systems each year in the countries, while the scale of suspected victims who seek help (e.g. through hotlines) number in the thousands. In China, it is estimated that millions of adults and children are trafficked each year within China and trafficked into the country from abroad.

More sex-disaggregated research is needed to collect reliable and indicative data, but compiled statistics on prevalence of human trafficking in the six countries can be found in Annex II.

Figure 12: U.S. Department of State TIP Report Tiers

Tier 1
Government acknowledges human trafficking and meets minimum standards.

Tier 2
Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam
Government doesn’t meet minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is striving to comply.

Tier 3
China, Lao PDR, Myanmar
Government doesn’t meet minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not striving to comply.

Economic growth and greater mobility in Southeast Asia increase the risk of human exploitation for cheap labor or trafficking. Each year the U.S. State Department produces the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report to encourage foreign governments to commit to ending human trafficking (Figure 12). This report divides countries into three tiers depending on level of compliance with standards for eliminating trafficking.

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221 Information obtained from the U.S. Department of State’s 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report. Please see https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/ as well as the individual country profiles available at: https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2018/index.htm

222 Ibid.


225 Information obtained from the U.S. Department of State’s 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report. Please see https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/ as well as the individual country profiles available at: https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2018/index.htm
Men, women, and children face risks of trafficking when migrating for work to other countries within the region and in the Middle East. Men are subjected predominantly to forced labor in agriculture, construction, and fishing and women are subjected to forced labor in factories, domestic servitude, and sex trafficking.

According to the United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT), trafficking is increasingly complex in China, with trafficking of children for illegal adoption and women and girls for forced marriage. China’s use of forced labor of both domestic and foreign victims a particular concern—one from which the government profits. Men, women, and children are trafficked into forced labor and women and girls are trafficked for sex, according to the TIP report.

Men and women, particularly in rural communities, are lured by false promises of legitimate work opportunities in neighboring countries, especially Thailand, as well as Vietnam, Malaysia, China, Taiwan, and Japan. Their participation in unsafe migration practices exposes individuals migrating for work to trafficking risks. Both men and women are subject to sex or labor trafficking.

Men, women, and children fall are vulnerable to forced labor or sex trafficking (mostly in Thailand and China, as well as other countries in Asia, the Middle East, and the United States). Men and boys are subjected mainly to forced labor in fishing, manufacturing, forestry, agriculture, and construction. According to the TIP report, women and girls are “primarily subjected to sex trafficking, domestic servitude, or forced labor in garment manufacturing.” Burmese women are also trafficked to China and subjected to sex trafficking and domestic servitude through forced marriages to Chinese men. Rohingya migrants, including children, are smuggled into forced marriage in India, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

Labor trafficking victims are exploited in commercial fishing, the poultry industry, manufacturing, agriculture, and domestic work or are forced into street begging. Thailand’s sex industry fuels demand for trafficked men, women, and children, both within Thailand and from surrounding countries. Thailand is also a transit country for human trafficking.

Men are subjected predominantly to forced labor in construction, fishing, agriculture, mining, logging, and manufacturing, primarily in Taiwan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Angola, United Arab Emirates, and Japan. The TIP report also notes that “there are increasing reports of Vietnamese labor trafficking victims in the UK and Ireland (including on cannabis farms), continental Europe, the Middle East, and in Pacific maritime industries.” Women and children, misled by fraudulent employment opportunities abroad, are sold to brothel operators in China, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore.

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226 Information obtained from the U.S. Department of State’s 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report. Please see https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/ as well as the individual country profiles available at: https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2018/index.htm

227 Ibid.
ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS

- Migration and the search for work opportunities increase the risk for both men and women of falling prey to traffickers in Southeast Asia. Individuals who become ostracized from their communities, including LGBTI individuals, may become more vulnerable to commercial exploitation, as their job opportunities may otherwise be limited due to social and economic discrimination and marginalization.
- Rigid gender norms and beliefs that restrict women’s access to opportunities or condone women’s objectivation and abuse increase women’s and girls’ vulnerability to trafficking.

CHALLENGES, INEQUALITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

All six countries have legal instruments that criminalize human trafficking in some form, but they are not always consistent with international law. Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, in their capacity as ASEAN member states, have also ratified the legally binding ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP), a convention that aims to strengthen regional cooperation on human trafficking, given the cross-border nature of this crime. However, all countries have gaps in implementation, including:

- Corruption (such as police officers accepting bribes to not investigate cases).
- Lack of adequate protection for victims (such as shelters).
- Gaps in knowledge and capacity to implement laws and handle the transnational aspects of this human rights crime (coordination does not always work in practice between countries).

These gaps exacerbate the vulnerability of both male and female victims. Women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation are especially vulnerable, as they may be subjected to biases and discrimination by the legal system and regarded as criminals themselves where prostitution is criminalized. They also have specific vulnerabilities from post-traumatic stress syndrome that need to be considered, such as avoiding memories of their deprivation of liberty and the repeated rapes, making them more prone to avoid remembering the traumatic events,228 which is problematic when a case is being legally examined, as exact details need to be recorded. Risk of retraumatization may also disincentivize victims from pursuing legal action against their traffickers, especially when faced with long, complicated, and expensive legal processes. Survivors may also experience anger and rage,229 which may cause them to be labelled as uncooperative by the legal system. Due to these factors, legal systems must adopt a victim-centered approach, recommended by the UN for survivors of trafficking and sexual abuse.230 These factors also contribute to the vast underreporting and underprosecution of human trafficking crimes.

229 Ibid.
230 For a brief overview, please see UNODC’s website at https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking-fund/human-trafficking-fund_about.html, or for more details, please see the publication From Victim to Survivor: A Second Chance at Life (UNODC, 2015).
Laws on child marriage in the region also vary, not to mention the enduring practice of child marriage throughout Southeast Asia. Despite efforts to increase the legal age for marriage and eliminate child marriage, the practice continues in the region and is fueled not only by traditional customs but also by high rates of adolescent pregnancy through either consensual or non-consensual sex (see Figure 13 for ages of consent). Prevalence of child marriage ranges from 11 percent in Vietnam to 35 percent in Lao PDR, a subset of which can be attributed to human trafficking.\textsuperscript{231}

**CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS**

Gender inequality is persistent in Southeast Asia, and despite progress in policies and laws, traditional cultural norms and beliefs still play important roles and constitute barriers to female empowerment.

All six countries examined are saturated with patriarchal beliefs (although small pockets of more matriarchal, matrilineal, and relatively gender-equitable ethnic groups are found also, such as the Cham tribe in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand and the Mosuo in China).\textsuperscript{232} Generally, women and girls in these countries live with an overarching cultural discourse (transmitted through the school system, the mainstream media, governments themselves, and most communities and families) that men are superior to women and more active agents in the public sphere, whereas women are more subservient by nature and more passive, both in the public sphere as well as in relation to men. This message reinforces problematic gender stereotypes of aggressiveness, assertiveness, and agency in the sexual sphere. Indeed, all countries have high rates of violence against women, particularly intimate partner violence, which is sometimes accepted even by women themselves.\textsuperscript{233}

In the six focus countries, there is an overall acceptance of men’s sexual promiscuity, whereas women’s virginity is still considered virtuous in many of them. This means on the one hand that the demand for sexual services by men is culturally accepted, which fuels the demand for prostitution services. Also, the social norm of women’s virginity rendering them “pure” or “valuable” creates enormous stigmas for women who are in prostitution, since they are viewed as “damaged goods.” In Cambodia there is a virgin trade, or trafficking in young women and children, underpinned by the cultural belief that a man who has sex with a virgin will reap health benefits. The women exposed to this, however, are often unable to return to their communities as they have lost their purity and sometimes are forced to remain in the sex trade.\textsuperscript{234} Furthermore, prostitution remains highly stigmatized in all the countries analyzed.

In China, the unnaturally small female population due to decades of abortion and infanticide of females drives a demand by Chinese men to find wives outside of China, a contributing factor to the trafficking of women into China, including from Myanmar and Vietnam.\textsuperscript{235} The U.S. State Department notes in the annual TIP report that Chinese men and their parents employ deceptive practices to entice women (and sometimes minors) from neighboring countries to come to China for marriage and then force these women into concubinism. The Chinese government does not have an identifiable state program to address this problem. In the 2016 *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, forced marriage was identified by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as an emerging trend in Southeast Asia.\textsuperscript{236} These social trends support the concept of men’s sexual entitlement and

\textsuperscript{231} Girls Not Brides, Atlas, available on their website: https://www.girlsnobrides.org/where-does-it-happen/atlas/


\textsuperscript{233} This is the case, for example, among older women when referring to sexual violence in Lao PDR; see Lao National Survey on Women’s Health and Life Experiences, UNFPA, UN Women, and WHO, https://lao.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Final_Eng_VAW%20Report.pdf

\textsuperscript{234} This has been reported by, among others, The Guardian in 2014 and CNN in 2013. For articles, see, for example https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jul/06/virginity-for-sale-cambodia-sex-trade and http://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2013/12/world/cambodia-child-sex-trade/


sexual objectification of women. This underlying culture fuels the demand for the sex trade, making it a highly profitable business. Furthermore, the social and legal stigmatization of sex work in the region also makes women who survive sex trafficking especially vulnerable to marginalization and discrimination (and sometimes violence), as they may not be accepted by their families or communities and face difficulties in access to support and legal services. This, in turn, leads some women to re-enter the sex trade for lack of other options.

GENDER ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TIME USE

Gender roles for women in the six countries analyzed include the role of caretaker; women are often considered mainly responsible for the household and the family’s well-being. In countries such as Lao PDR and Vietnam, women who have experienced domestic violence are often urged to return to the abuser and uphold “family harmony.”237 Men are more likely than women to take part in income-earning activities outside the household and tend to be more active in the public sphere, including the political sphere. These well-defined and socially reinforced gender roles contribute to shaping patterns of trafficking in persons in the region, particularly how women and men are trafficked. Women and girls are, in most cases, trafficked into domestic servitude and the sex trade; forced labor, including work in the garment industry; and other types of factory work. Men and boys are trafficked predominantly into large infrastructure projects, coal mines, and the fisheries industry.

ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES AND PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION MAKING

Women in the six countries analyzed have limited leadership and decision-making power; do not enjoy the same opportunities and access to social, economic, and political resources as men; and are generally granted a lower status and value at the family, community, and social levels than men (although factors such as age, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status, and SOGIE create variations in status within groups of women and men).238 Women’s limited access to resources also means limited access to information about trafficking, which renders them more likely to believe a fraudulent job offer and be oblivious to the risks of travelling abroad for work. Their lower status in the community can make it culturally more acceptable for families to sell girls off to traffickers. These inequalities increase women’s vulnerability to trafficking.

Women are also underrepresented in leadership positions and hold fewer positions of decision-making power in both the public and private sectors. This, of course, also applies to legal enforcement of trafficking prosecution, prevention, and response. Southeast Asia’s male-dominated and gender-biased justice systems are still causing a myriad of barriers for women seeking help, especially for sexual violence and trafficking for sexual exploitation.239

Other challenges, obstacles, and inequalities confront female empowerment in human trafficking. Harmful gender stereotypes that condone women’s objectivization and abuse or otherwise dehumanize women conceptually support their exploitation, especially in the sex industry. All six countries need to step up their efforts to tackle the issue by addressing not only the legal and policy domain but also the cultural and social domain. Finally, despite progress in reporting, documentation, and analysis, gaps in data collection and dissemination among stakeholders and with the broader international community hinder a complete gender analysis and understanding of the magnitude of the human trafficking problem in Southeast Asia.240

237 Concepts highly valued in these post-socialist states, where certificates of excellence are granted from the government to “happy families” or “happy villages”; see, for example, L. Vu, “Family Dynamics in Vietnam,” Connecticut College 2014. https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1019&context=econhp

238 US Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, 2018


240 In, for example, Thailand, whose government requires judicial branch officials to report trafficking-related cases into an integrated database. Information obtained from the U.S. Department of State 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report on Thailand. Available at: https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2018/282764.htm
REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

OVERVIEW

In Southeast Asia, wildlife trafficking is a serious concern in which all six focus countries play a role (Table 13). Ivory and other high-value, illegal wildlife products are transited through many of the countries, notably Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand, and hunting occurs in protected areas, including in Vietnam and Lao PDR. China, where demand for wildlife goods remains high, is a key market. In Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, hunting and trafficking of protected animal species such as tigers remain a problem. The trade poses environmental threats such as loss of biodiversity and contributes to negative health outcomes for marginalized, ethnic populations. Negative health outcomes are caused by government hunting bans in rural areas, which diminish the local consumption of meat protein.241

Table 13: Trends in Wildlife Trafficking

Cambodia acts as a key transit hub for shipments of ivory and other high-value wildlife products242 and plays an increasingly apparent role in illegal wildlife trafficking. Rampant domestic and cross-border trade with Vietnam and Thailand fuels an increase in hunting rates in Cambodian protected areas, including in remote regions where hunting was not formerly a problem.

Substantial demand for wildlife products still exists in China, making it a key destination country in the illegal market. Though China recently banned all internal ivory sales (which led to the closing of 172 ivory carving factories and shops),243 the country also recently reversed a 25-year ban on trade in rhino and tiger bones.244 At the same time, it is feared that the government has issued licenses for the manufacture and sale of medicines containing elephant skin.

Lao PDR is a major transit and source country for illegal trafficking of exotic and endangered animals, including tigers, pangolins, black bears, and elephants.245 In May 2018, the prime minister issued an order to strengthen regulations against illegal hunting and farming. This order authorized the forestry department to shut down farms and increased penalties for border guards found assisting traffickers.246 Despite increased regulations, there are concerns that many Laotian politicians are complicit in illegal wildlife operations.247

 Trafficking of wild animals continues despite legal commitment to curb it.\textsuperscript{248} Because of the presence of significant populations of threatened species and the country’s strategic position between China, Thailand, and India, Myanmar is an important country for large cat skins and other cat parts.\textsuperscript{249} Increasing rates of human-elephant conflict and poaching incidents pose a dire threat.\textsuperscript{250} The illegal trade of wild-collected ornamental plants in Myanmar (and Southeast Asia) has been almost completely overlooked.\textsuperscript{251}

Habitat loss, poaching, trafficking, human-wildlife conflict, and domestic use of wildlife are a concern.\textsuperscript{252} Rhinoceros horns, pangolin scales, turtles, and other exotic wildlife are repeatedly smuggled through Thailand.

Vietnam is an important nexus in illegal wildlife trafficking. The scale of the problem in Vietnam is disastrous not only for wildlife but also for small subsistence farms, the environment, and wild subsistence protein, with negative health outcomes for marginalized, ethnic populations.\textsuperscript{254} The trade is primarily in live animals used for traditional medicines, as bushmeat, and as pets\textsuperscript{255} despite bans on hunting without permits, a personal weapons ban, and the placement of many animals on the Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) list.

\section*{ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS}

In Southeast Asia, both men and women are affected by and involved in illegal wildlife trafficking. A 2013 study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime indicates that over 70 percent of those involved in the wildlife trafficking trade in East Asia and the Pacific are men, often from poor rural areas. Women have been involved in approximately 20 percent of cases.\textsuperscript{256} However, gender differences influence how men and women participate; for instance, gender norms and traditional divisions of labor result in men being more involved in wildlife hunting, whereas women are more likely to be involved in selling illegal wildlife goods at markets. Extremely limited data are available on how men and women consume illegal wildlife goods, but the analysis found anecdotal evidence that some products sold in China, such as bear bile, are used differently by men and women.\textsuperscript{257} Similar gender trends are reflected in the ways men and women participate in wildlife conservation and protection efforts.

\section*{CHALLENGES, INEQUALITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item This includes the Myanmar Wildlife Protection and Protected Areas Law (1994), which was revised and enacted on May 21, 2018 (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, 2018).
\item J. Phelps, A Blooming Trade: Illegal Trade of Ornamental Orchids in Mainland Southeast Asia (Thailand, Lao PDR, Myanmar) (Selangor, Malaysia: TRAFFIC, 2015).
\item These include high-value timber species such as Dalbergia cochinchinensis, commonly known as Siamese Rosewood, and fauna species such as the Indochinese and Malayan Tiger, Leopard, Clouded Leopard, Elephant, Sun Bear, and Sunda Pangolin.
\item United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Transnational Organized Crime in East Asia and the Pacific: A Threat Assessment (April 2013)
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
LAWs, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

Legislation aiming to tackle wildlife trafficking in Southeast Asia has partially experienced shortfalls in implementation, also due to corruption. Laws and policies also tend to be gender blind, such as Thailand’s Elephant Ivory Act of 2014 and 2015, which makes no reference to the differing roles of women and men in the elimination of illegal wildlife trafficking. In all six countries analyzed, gender issues are overlooked or little addressed in wildlife conservation and management efforts.

CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS AND ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES AND PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION MAKING

Traditional gender stereotypes prevalent in Southeast Asian societies are expressed, reinforced, and sustained through the belief that “forest patrolling is a man’s job.” There is often a social reluctance, and sometimes opposition, for women to be involved in conservation and protection efforts. This is true in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand, where rigid gender norms and stereotypes lead to women’s underrepresentation in leadership and decision-making roles in wildlife antitrafficking efforts. However, lack of rigorous sex-disaggregated data (as well as data that takes into consideration age, socioeconomic status, geographical location, and other social markers) in the sector prevents more complex analysis of patterns of power and decision making in the sector.

Women’s and men’s understanding of, participation in, and representation in wildlife conservation efforts are an important component of fair, inclusive, and effective conservation and protection processes. However, pervasive rigid gender norms and inequitable social practices may leave women out of these processes. Cultural norms and beliefs about men’s and women’s differential social roles also translate into men and women occupying different spaces in the illegal wildlife trafficking sector, reflecting the different spaces (and roles) occupied by men and women in civil society. However, more research is needed to better understand the gendered character of the sector, particularly the roles that women play in illegal wildlife trafficking, including their role as consumers of illegal wildlife goods.

Not much is known about the gender dimension of wildlife trafficking in Southeast Asia. However, some research evidence suggests that men and women’s attitudes about wildlife trafficking vary based on the perceived benefits of and experiences associated with protected areas or species (Figure 14). However, not all the focus countries exhibit this trend, and the paucity of data challenges deeper analysis.

Figure 14: Gender Dimension in Perception of Wildlife Conservation

In Myanmar, according to one study, women and men seem to differ in how they consider conservation efforts, how they perceive protected areas, and how they experience the enforcement of regulations against extraction because men and women view benefits attained from ecosystem protection services differently. Interestingly, a similar study in Thailand did not find any gender difference in this area, possibly pointing to a greater and more equal understanding of these issues among women and men in Thailand than in neighboring Myanmar, a country that is significantly less developed.


260 Ibid.
Table 14: Wildlife Trafficking: Cultural Norms

**CAMBODIA**

| It has been reported that men go deeper into the forests to capture wildlife. Men collect high-value non-timber forest products (NTFP) such as resin, whereas women collect NTFP used in their homes or in producing handicrafts, e.g., bamboo shoots, sedge, or rattan.261 |

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**MYANMAR**

| Illegal ivory carvers are men, whereas vendors who sell ivory products and jade are predominantly women.262 |

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**THAILAND**

| Women are formally underrepresented in efforts to protect wildlife, including in curbing wildlife trafficking, and in consequence female park rangers are uncommon.263 Rigid social and gender norms around femininity, particularly those that relate to women’s domestic role as the mother/nurturer, preclude women from active participation in formal efforts to protect wildlife. In addition, women are confronted with harmful stereotypes, including that they “are not suited for the ranger lifestyle, which comprises long working hours in spartan and sometimes dangerous conditions and takes them away from loved ones.”264 |

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**VIETNAM**

| Hunting is traditionally a man’s task, and this applies to illegal wildlife hunting as well. Men travel long distances to find overexploited wildlife populations, while women stay behind assuming the burden of taking care of the home. It is predominantly men who reap the monetary benefits of the illegal trade.265 |

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GENDER ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TIME USE

Traditional gendered roles in Southeast Asia, such as women being mainly responsible for caregiving and household duties and involved in home-based economic activities and men being more involved in the public sphere and in paid economic activities outside the house, sustain a gendered division of labor that is reflected in the wildlife trafficking sector. However, unexpected and differential consequences may emerge for women and men as an effect of wildlife trafficking because of these different roles that they perform. In Myanmar, for example, research suggests that the human-elephant conflict is fueled by the threat of food insecurity, as elephants are thought to come to villages to eat crops and present a danger for villagers going into forests. Though women often shoulder the burden of these adverse effects (given their responsibility for firewood collection and, often, home agriculture), they are minimally involved in efforts to remediate human-elephant conflict. In Myanmar, it is believed that “elephants are jealous of women because of their shorter gestation

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261 USAID, Cambodia Gender Assessment (USAID/Cambodia, September 2010), citing Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA), A Fair Share for Women: Cambodia Gender Assessment (Phnom Penh: MoWA, 2008).

262 Lucy Vigne And Esmond Martin, Myanmar’s Growing Illegal Ivory Trade with China (Nairobi, Kenya: Save The Elephants, 2018).

263 “Kui Buri National Park’s Only Female Ranger Shatters Stereotypes.”

264 Ibid.


267 In seven villages near the western Thailand Salakpra Wildlife Sanctuary, where human-elephant conflict is common, 410 households and 46 plantation owners were surveyed. Please see A. Van de Water, K. Matteson, “Human-Elephant Conflict in Western Thailand: Socio-Economic Drivers and Potential Mitigation Strategies,” PLOS One (June 1, 2018). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0194736
period, causing them to attack humans if women are nearby.”  

Women are also predominantly responsible for providing the family with food, and when food insecurity strikes, they may be subjected to violence due to heightened tensions in the home.

Bear trafficking, a Chinese-Vietnamese cross-border problem, demonstrates gender differences in the consumption of illegal wildlife products (in this case, bear bile). Thought to be a cure for ailments as diverse as cancer and hangovers, bear bile is still in high demand in China, despite widespread activism to end its use. According to a report in Vietnam, almost twice as many men as women use bear bile, and their use of bear bile is more diverse in that they use it not only for health problems but also for entertainment, likely due to their greater opportunity for socialization.

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269 A strong positive association between food insecurity and intimate partner violence was found in a study conducted by the Fielding School of Public Health, University of California, Los Angeles, in 2016. The study is available at, for example: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26096652](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26096652)

REGIONAL GENDER TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW

The region has seen unparalleled growth in higher education and youth workforce development over the past few decades. This growth reflects changing social attitudes as much as rapid economic development through the region. Southeast Asia has its own rich history of education, and globalization and increasing economic freedom have made education and its benefits more culturally appealing. In several countries analyzed, including China, Lao PDR, and Vietnam, new higher education institutions and universities have been established, and some have started to rise through global rankings. Gains have been made in closing gender gaps in enrollment rates in primary and secondary education, and in several countries gender parity at the primary and even secondary level has been achieved. This has a positive effect on higher education enrollment throughout the region. Data suggest that in Southeast Asia, access to education among young people over the past few decades has expanded, but gender-specific challenges in access and chosen field of study remain.

Table 15: Trends in Higher Education and Workforce Development

Males dominate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects and females are enrolled predominantly in literature, history, and other humanities majors; this pattern is clearly observed at the PhD level, where, although women outnumber men overall, they make up less than half the students in STEM fields.271

Across subject areas in higher education, females are predominant in health, social sciences, accounting, and secretarial courses, and male students outnumber female students in engineering, architecture, forestry, natural resources, law, and governance studies.272

Women tend to be overrepresented in areas such as teacher education, whereas men are overrepresented in forestry and engineering programs and, generally, in universities and colleges under the supervision of the Ministry of Defense.273

At the tertiary education level, men specialize in engineering, manufacturing, construction, and services, whereas women enroll in social sciences, education, humanities, and the arts.274

ISSUES, POLICIES, AND TRENDS

- Strong gender differences exist in field of study at the higher education level, driven by stereotypical gender role allocations. Men overwhelmingly dominate STEM fields and women occupy studies in crafts, health care, education and social sciences, and tourism and hospitality.
- The gender-stereotyped character of workforce development programs results in females’ weak participation in training programs that lead to higher-paid and more valued jobs.

273 In considering women’s high enrollment rate in higher education institutions, however, it is important to remember that there is greater unemployment among women than among men, presenting incongruence between investment required for women to remain in education compared with the returns from the labor market. Please see CESR, ADB, and Australian Aid, CESR Phase I Technical Appendix on the Secondary Education Subsector (publication information).
• A range and combination of social, cultural, and economic factors challenge women’s (and men’s) participation in certain strains of higher education and youth workforce development programs, with LGBTI individuals experiencing particular difficulties in accessing quality endowments.

• Discriminatory societal attitudes and rigid gender norms create barriers for female access to certain strains of higher education and youth workforce development, which constrains the extent to which females participate in the benefits of the labor market.

**CHALLENGES, INEQUITIES, AND OBSTACLES TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT**

World Bank data show near parity in primary and secondary education enrollment rates across the region (Figure 15). Male and female enrollment vary more in tertiary education. In higher education and youth workforce development, across the six countries analyzed, gender differences mark chosen field of study and consequently the type of employment that women enter, with more women in fields that yield lower wages than those pursued by males. Because of stereotypical gender norms, women dominate areas such as arts and crafts, health care, education and social sciences, and tourism and hospitality.

Socioeconomic status, location, and ethnicity also affect educational advancement and direction, however. In China, for example, women pursuing higher education—typically in liberal arts fields—more often come from wealthy, urban households, whereas men pursuing higher education in STEM disciplines more often come from poor, rural households.\(^7\) In Vietnam, wealth and mother’s education level substantially affect educational opportunities and advancement.\(^6\) Also, ethnic minority children in Vietnam are at a disadvantage in early education, as Vietnamese is the only language of instruction.\(^7\)

In Vietnam, Confucian influence is pervasive. A study of women in academia revealed the disparity between laws establishing gender equality and actual practice. Although “patriarchal hierarchy remains dominant in the institutional administrative system, Vietnamese Confucian ideology continues to confine and adversely affect both men’s and women’s perceptions of women’s social roles, status, and forms of social participation.”\(^7\) Such beliefs hinder women’s advancement in education.

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\(^7\) X. Duoduo, “Is Gender Equality at Chinese Colleges a Sham?”


\(^7\) Ibid.

\(^7\) Ngoc Lan Thi Dang, “Insights into Vietnamese Culture of Gender and Factors Hindering Academic Women’s Advancement to Leadership Positions,” in Discourses on Gender and Sexual Inequality, edited by Marla H. Kohlman, Dana B. Krieg (Emerald Publishing Limited, 2017).
Furthermore, women are still expected to be good housewives and therefore are more likely to think of themselves this way, tending to choose education or training paths permitting them to combine career and family obligations more easily. They may also face cultural pressure to exit the workforce after having children. Given the age at first birth (Figure 16), even women who stay in the workforce face additional responsibilities at home for child-rearing relatively early in their careers. Traditional preferences for and by females to pursue education and/or training in gender-typical areas of work persist, even though certain skills are in high demand in male-dominated areas that could easily be undertaken by women. For example, despite evidence that having more women on boards of financial institutions leads to higher returns and positive perceptions of “feminine” traits in leaders, there are persisting barriers to greater diversity in leadership. Research conducted by Women’s World Banking indicates that the assumption that men and women prefer different kinds of work, and that women will opt to leave the workforce to care for their family, forms a cultural barrier to women’s advancement.279

These attitudes perpetuate and sustain an environment within educational institutions that discriminate against women seeking education and/or training opportunities (and later job opportunities) in non-traditional sectors of work for females.280 This discrimination leads to women’s underrepresentation in several sectors of the economy, particularly in high-paid occupations, including utilities, real estate, transportation, communication, and public administration as well as in leadership, managerial, or executive positions. Across the region, women face limited capacity to enter professions and positions traditionally considered masculine and male dominated, in which power resides and decisions are made.

Almost universally, in all six countries analyzed, despite significant progress in youth workforce development, particularly in increasing girls and women’s participation in technical and vocational education and training (TVET), gender-specific challenges and gaps remain.

Within youth workforce development programs, training offered to women is often gender stereotyped, offering skills such as weaving, textiles and garments, beautician and hair-dressing, and handicrafts. Also, female participation is weak in formal, long-term, high-skilled, and high-demand training programs in sectors such as construction and mechanics. At the TVET level in Lao PDR, for instance, a large majority of female students are enrolled in agriculture, hospitality, and tailoring courses,281 occupations traditionally considered feminine and women-centered. The government of Vietnam has committed to expanding TVET education for youth. However, the programs are gender stereotyped in that the highest enrollment is in industrial, electricity, and automobile technology fields dominated by men.282 These are not isolated examples, as Cambodia, China, Myanmar, and Thailand follow this trend. In consequence, female graduates often experience lower employment opportunities and wage discrimination. In addition, women tend to be employed in lower positions

281 World Bank, Country Gender Assessment for Lao PDR, 25.
and low-skilled jobs and seldom in management positions, which in turn leads to women’s concentration in a few sectors, usually with less social and economic value.283

ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES

A range of social, cultural, and economic factors challenge women’s participation in certain strains of higher education and youth workforce development programs, including TVET. These factors, alone or combined, become obstacles to female empowerment and underscore the role of harmful gender norms in choosing a field of study, particularly for females. In China, for example, a student’s choice of major is influenced by traditional gender norms related to women’s traditional role at home.284

Though the average age of marriage has risen in recent years (currently 29 for males and 27 for females, a year increase since 2014),285 the social stigma of becoming a “leftover woman”286 (unmarried woman over the age of 27) and the knowledge that STEM subjects require more lab and study time encourage women to opt for subjects that require less time or to not pursue advanced degrees.287 Evidence of sexual harassment and abuse of female students may also deter women288 from pursuing an advanced degree.

Women and girls, especially from ethnic minorities, continue to face constraints in access and retention in school, particularly in rural areas, where access to higher and vocational education is constrained by geographic location. In Lao PDR, although families are increasingly disposed to send girls to primary school, this willingness does not extend to higher levels of education.289 LGBTI individuals also suffer from discrimination and marginalization in education (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Discrimination and Marginalization of LGBTIs in Education

Sexual orientation and gender expression and identity is a reason for exclusion from (and discrimination within) higher education and youth workforce development programs. Across the region LGBTI individuals experience discrimination and marginalization in access to education and vocational training, although data are not regularly or sufficiently collected, in some cases, official statistics do not exist. Furthermore, analysis of the available research evidence in Cambodia, China, Thailand, and Vietnam show that LGBTI groups also differ in access to vocational training, with transgender individuals reporting, on average, the highest rates of exclusion and discrimination.


284 Dudo, “Is Gender Equality at Colleges a Sham?”
286 A Chinese term for unmarried women after their late 20s or so; in British, a “spinster.”
288 Ibid.
CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS; GENDER ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TIME USE

Striking trends are emerging in the region, with females more likely to enroll in higher education. Females, more so in urban than in rural settings, appear to start university on time.291

Some regional evidence suggests factors that may have specific gender impacts on higher education enrollment. For example, boys’ lower enrollment rates in higher education may reflect the fact that boys are more likely to find employment at an earlier age than girls and that girls are more likely to pursue a career as a teacher and hence must continue their studies at a higher education institution. Cultural traditions also influence this trend. In Myanmar, for instance, low teacher and professor salaries likely make these professions less appealing to men, who may be under social pressure to be the main breadwinner and who can earn a higher income in other sectors of the economy, often without higher education.292 In Thailand, one reason for this is that boys are often co-opted to work full time, putting an end to their formal learning. Furthermore, the trend may also be attributed to fewer opportunities in the agriculture sector, so women more than men are pushed to remain in school. Although employment opportunities have grown and continue to be on the rise for women, unemployed women are more likely to pursue additional schooling rather than remain unemployed.293 This underlines the fact that gender equality is not just about women and girls but about men and boys as well.

Gender gaps in higher education and youth workforce development become more pronounced farther along the career path. Despite significant progress in TVET access and participation, these programs remain gender stereotyped, and females still experience lower employment opportunities and lower wages, as in Cambodia. Also, in Vietnam, women’s rising enrollment in higher education does not extend to better employment opportunities. Furthermore, the outcomes associated with higher unemployment among women than men in the region point to systemic discrimination against women holding higher education qualifications in the workforce. In Vietnam, despite women’s higher enrollment, on average, more males are employed after graduation as the demand for workers with either professional training or tertiary education is not strong in Vietnam’s primarily low- or medium-value enterprises.294 Moreover, some women are worse off than others in terms of being paid less, and women with a higher education seem to suffer the biggest gap.295 For instance, Thai females have outnumbered and outperformed males in their schooling, but this hasn’t necessarily translated into better job opportunities or higher pay.296 Though 57 percent of PhDs in Thailand are awarded to women297 and women constitute 51 percent of science researchers,298 traditional expectations for women to be caregivers in the family, and the male-dominant culture of

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292 Ibid.
academic institutions, place women at an unfair disadvantage by discouraging them from professional and academic career advancement.299

In addition, violence and bullying in schools affect adolescent girls and young women (as well as adolescent boys and young men) at all levels of education. Social exclusion and violence on the basis of real or perceived SOGIE are a persistent issue across the region, yet the problem remains unexamined and data at the higher and tertiary education level are lacking (see Figure 18). A 2014 study of school-based GBV among university students found that both teachers and classmates are perpetrators, and more than 75 percent of students reported that they had been the victim of bullying on the basis of SOGIE, with similar results in Thailand.300 However, the culture of school-related GBV, including violence on the basis of SOGIE, disability, and ethnicity among other social markers, at the primary and secondary levels most likely continues on to higher and tertiary education. Evidence from Cambodia shows that disability remains a neglected factor at all levels of education, including youth employment development efforts.301 In Lao PDR, availability of higher education is extremely restricted as many universities do not accept students with disabilities and, although each provincial technical school is mandated to admit disabled applicants, there is no attempt to recruit them.302

Figure 18: Wage Gaps between Men and Women in Thailand

In education, the traditional gender gap has been reversed at the upper secondary and tertiary levels, with female enrollment slightly surpassing that of males. However, wage gaps between men and women persist, with the ratio of earned income of women and men estimated at 0.78 to 1.00. Women represent 59.7 percent of the labor force, but they are underrepresented in several non-agricultural sectors and highly paid managerial and executive positions. For example, only 34 percent of business executives were women in 2014. Female labor participation gaps are particularly acute in the Deep South, where the female participation rate stands at 66 percent compared with 86 percent for males. Also, women’s participation in national and sub-national politics has been very low with, for example, only 6 percent of appointed members to the National Legislative Assembly being women. Over 40 percent of SMEs are owned by women, but these tend to be smaller than those owned by males and concentrated in lower value-added services sectors.


302 USAID, Analysis of Gender and Disability in Lao PDR (USAID, 2017), 22.
CONCLUSIONS

Rapid growth, structural transformation, and poverty reduction have been accompanied by progress toward gender equality in several key areas. Economic development has led to the closing of gender gaps in school enrollment, with women now more likely to enroll in higher education. Greater economic opportunities, though, have not been distributed equally among women and men. Women are underrepresented in higher-paying fields and leadership and continue to bear the majority of responsibility for domestic unpaid work. Though Southeast Asian women, particularly young, educated women living in urban areas, have greater access to and control over assets and resources than their mothers and grandmothers, they continue to be underrepresented in decision making and leadership in many sectors of the economy and in both public and private spheres. The male-dominated character of the majority of the analyzed sectors, and the patriarchal nature of the institutional practices within them, limit how and to what extent women are involved in decision making and leadership.

Challenges, inequalities, and obstacles to female empowerment vary across the sectors and across the six countries analyzed. However, the common denominators, across all sectors and in all countries, are the traditional norms, cultural traditions, and commonly reinforced and practiced stereotypes around gender roles, responsibilities, and time use. These deeply entrenched attitudes and perceptions sustain a gendered division of labor that emphasizes women’s role in household domestic duties, limiting their economic opportunities in employment outside the home. This results in financial disparities between men and women, which contributes to reduced agency for women both inside and outside the home. This also leads to underrepresentation of women in leadership and decision-making positions, making it less likely that their needs will be fully considered in workplaces or in policy development.

Climate change is an increasing concern in Southeast Asia, and women face higher risks from the impacts of climate change, such as food insecurity, greater exposure to harmful chemicals (through use of coal in cooking), and greater work burdens (such as the need to travel farther to find water during a drought).

Additionally, progress in gender equality is not equally distributed across the region. Women in China, Thailand, and Vietnam, in general, have experienced gains and benefits more rapidly than women living in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar. In these latter three countries, women face challenges in access to and control over assets and resources and are more vulnerable to exploitation. Southeast Asia is marked by very dynamic migration flows, both regulated and unregulated. With these migration flows comes the risk of exploitation of men, women, and children, whether as cheap labor or as victims of human trafficking. Women are especially disempowered as they are targeted predominantly for sex trafficking, a very lucrative crime in all the examined countries. Men are more frequently targeted for labor trafficking.

The region has demonstrated a commitment to legally protecting gender equality by introducing and passing national laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices addressing GBV and human trafficking. The implementation of these laws, though, remains weak, and women and girls remain highly vulnerable to GBV, often at the hands of an intimate partner. Furthermore, policy environments remain mostly gender blind in the following sectors: energy, trade, natural resource management, wildlife trafficking, and violent extremism and conflict. There is some recognition of gender-specific challenges in health, education, and human trafficking, though this varies by country.

Across the sectors, sex-disaggregated data are not always available, making it difficult to identify gender-specific advances in or constraints to female empowerment. Though this is improving in sectors such as health, education, and (to a more limited extent) human trafficking, sex-disaggregated data are largely unavailable in natural resource management, energy, and wildlife trafficking. Across all sectors, disaggregation according to LGBTI identification, ethnicity/minority, and disability status is virtually nonexistent. The absence of data slows any progress in promoting equality for women and
men who also share one or more of these characteristics. Such social markers are important for understanding unique experiences of issues such as conflict and violence, workplace discrimination, and access to health care.
ANNEX I: STATEMENT OF WORK

PURPOSE

This research will augment ongoing strategy and project-level design in preparation for development of the Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS) and is a component of USAID/RDMA’s commitment to strong planning and evidence-based decision-making. This research is a component under Task Order 1 of the MEL IDIQ.

Task 1: Gender Analysis and Stakeholder Mapping in China and Southeast Asia

Over the last several decades, women in Southeast Asia have made social, political, and economic gains. Thus, Southeast Asia fares well on some measures of gender equity. For example, in education women have far greater access and opportunity than would have been available a few decades ago. In Thailand, there are now on average more female graduates than male; however, this educational success has not always translated into economic success. Women are often concentrated in less well remunerated occupations and have to contend with management that is almost exclusively male. Also, gender-based violence, lack of political voice, and cultural norms of masculinity and femininity that privilege men, especially in economic and political arenas, further women’s marginalization. This is complicated by wide disparities between regions, states, and urban/ rural zones. Finally, men and masculinities are almost completely excluded as categories for inquiry, being relegated to a supporting role in gender analysis and often in simplified stereotypical tropes.

Task 1 will assist USAID/RDMA in understanding the, at times, contradictory and very complex trends regarding gender in China and Southeast Asia. For the purposes of this research, Southeast Asia refers to Thailand, Burma (Myanmar), Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

1. Description of Task

   Part I: In order to better understand gender in China and Southeast Asia, the Contractor will need to conduct a gender analysis to identify, understand, and explain, to the extent practicable, gaps between men and women that exist in countries, as well as regionally. This analysis will focus on broad trends within several key sectors:

   1. Energy
   2. Natural Resources Management
   3. Trade
   4. Health (Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Emerging Pandemic Threats)
   5. Violent Extremism and Conflict Issues
   6. Human Trafficking
   7. Wildlife Trafficking
   8. Higher Education and Youth Workforce Development

   This is meant to be a high-level analysis, utilizing primarily secondary data sources and focusing on broad trends over the last five years. The analysis should identify the macro or sectoral level societal gender inequalities or obstacles to female empowerment and social inclusion. In each sector, the trends and analysis should address:

   A) Differences in the status of women and men and their differential access to assets, resources, opportunities, and services;

   B) The influence of gender roles and norms on the division of time between paid employment, unpaid work (including subsistence production and care for family members), and volunteer activities;

   C) The influence of gender roles and norms on leadership roles and decision-making; constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females;

   D) Potential differential impacts of development policies and programs on males and females, including unintended or negative consequences, if identified in the literature; and
E) Intersectionality of the key gender-specific trends with other categories, including age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, and disability.

Based on the initial literature review, the Contractor may need to consult with stakeholders to address key literature gaps, to gain access to unpublished information, and to understand the local context. No travel is authorized. A key deliverable of this task will be to map key stakeholders by identifying regional and subject-matter experts on gender and social inclusion, organizations, and other entities as applicable.

Special note: When analyzing the trends for the sectors listed above, the Contractor must utilize USAID's five domains:

- Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices that influence the context in which men and women act and make decisions;
- Cultural Norms and Beliefs;
- Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use;
- Access to and Control over Assets and Resources; and
- Patterns of Power and Decision-making.


Part II: As an annex the Contractor should develop a 2-3 page overview (fact sheet) for each country: China, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, Burma (Myanmar), and Thailand. The overview should list key gender gaps identified in Part I, note key sex-disaggregated statistics, and provide a brief country profile of the status of men and women in terms of leadership roles in society and gender norms. There should also be a brief overview of key intersectionality findings as they relate to gender and female empowerment.

Part III: The Contractor will write an annotated bibliography with the major research/literature organized by sector. The annotation should clearly note the country(ies) applicable.

2. Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research team begins work</td>
<td>October 30, 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft mapping of key stakeholders</td>
<td>November 19, 2018</td>
<td>Deliverable is an initial stakeholder mapping analysis. USAID has seven (7) days to review the draft stakeholder mapping and provide comments to the research team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft deliverables submitted to USAID</td>
<td>January 4, 2019</td>
<td>Deliverable is a completed stakeholder mapping analysis and a gender analysis with annotated bibliography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID reviews draft deliverables and provides comments to research team</td>
<td>January 11, 2019</td>
<td>USAID has seven (7) days to review the draft gender analysis and provide comments to the research team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research team finalizes and submits final deliverables</td>
<td>January 28, 2019</td>
<td>Research team has seven (7) days to finalize the literature review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **Deliverable**

The deliverable of this task will be a stakeholder mapping and gender analysis that provide an overview of the themes relevant to the desk research instructions detailed above based on the most significant sources available in the field.
ANNEX II: DATA RELATED TO GBV AND TRAFFICKING

Prevalence of GBV\textsuperscript{303}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Physical and/or Sexual Intimate Partner Violence</th>
<th>Physical and/or Sexual Intimate Partner Violence in the last 12 months</th>
<th>Non-Partner Sexual Violence</th>
<th>Child Marriage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Lifetime: 21%</td>
<td>Last 12 months: 8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Official National Statistics Not Available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td>Lifetime: 15%</td>
<td>Last 12 months: 6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Lifetime: 17%</td>
<td>Last 12 months: 11%</td>
<td>Official National Statistics Not Available</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Official National Statistics Not Available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Lifetime: 34%</td>
<td>Last 12 months: 9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{303} According to the UN, one in three women will experience violence in their lifetime, no matter where in the world or what socioeconomic status. Figures that are available are conservative, since most cases never get reported and the awareness of what constitutes violence remains low (i.e., a normalization of VAW exists, making it difficult for people to report or denounce it, even informally). Official numbers do not exist for all countries, only for those that have carried out prevalence studies. These numbers exclude emotional and economic violence, bullying in schools, and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as violence by the larger family, such as grandparents and in-laws. For data on VAW, see the United Nations’ Global Database on VAW at: [http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en](http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en)
### Scale of trafficking in persons

#### Cambodia:
- **Legal**: authorities prosecuted 207 individuals under the anti-trafficking law or related provisions in the penal code in 2017. The National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT) reported courts convicted at least 129 traffickers, up from 100 in 2016.
- **Numbers of victims**: It is estimated that thousands of people are working under debt bondage in hard labor within Cambodia; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) repatriated 986 Cambodian trafficking victims from nine countries in 2017.

#### China:
- **Legal**: The Ministry of Public Security (MPS) did not report the number of investigations initiated into possible trafficking cases in 2017, while in 2016 there were 1,004 cases.
- **Numbers of victims**: China’s entire internal migrant population, estimated to exceed 180 million people, is vulnerable to trafficking. Traffickers also target persons with developmental disabilities and children whose parents have left them with relatives, subjecting them to forced labor and forced begging. It is estimated that more than 60 million children are trafficked in this mode each year.

#### Lao PDR:
- **Legal**: In 2017, the Ministry of Public Security reported identifying 44 trafficking cases.
- **Numbers of victims**: Authorities reported officially identifying a total of 86 victims in 2017 (184 in 2016)-22 Lao victims of internal trafficking (85 in 2016) and 64 Lao victims subjected to trafficking abroad (99 in 2016; 143 in 2015). In addition, many trafficking victims may be among the thousands of migrants deported annually from Thailand without official notification.

#### Myanmar:
- **Legal**: In 2017, the government reported investigating 185 trafficking cases (95 in 2016). Authorities reported prosecuting 532 individuals. Courts convicted 156 of these traffickers, compared with 145 in 2016.
- **Numbers of victims**: Police reported identifying foreign governments’ referrals for 289 sex and labor trafficking victims in 2017. The exact number of domestic victims identified by Burmese authorities was unknown, but police reported assisting victims in 44 cases of trafficking within the country. International monitors had verified at least 49 cases of child-soldier recruitment by the Tatmadaw in the first half of 2017, and more than 100 additional unverified cases of recruitment were under review. There were at least 13 documented cases of children in support roles for the military (as cleaners, cooks, etc.) in 2017, one of which involved more than 200 children. An estimated 250,000 displaced people (mainly Rohingya) are at increased risk of trafficking. Many women and girls among the estimated 687,000 Rohingya who fled from conflict in Rakhine to neighboring Bangladesh since August 2017 have been subjected to sex trafficking in Bangladesh and India.

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304 Comprehensive and reliable data on the scale/extent of trafficking does not exist for Southeast Asia, but some numbers and estimates (albeit limited) have been established and are summarized below. Especially important is to understand that the legal numbers are not indicative of the extent of the crime, as human trafficking remains one of the most underreported crimes globally. However, they do give an insight into the legal response to the crime. The data are from the U.S. Department of State *Trafficking in Persons Report 2018*. 
**Thailand:**

- **Legal:** The government convicted 12 officials complicit in trafficking crimes in 2017, including 11 officials involved in the trafficking of Rohingya migrants. The government reported investigating 302 trafficking cases in 2017, initiating prosecutions against 638 suspected traffickers and convicting 466 traffickers in 2017. Also, 41 allegations of online child exploitation were investigated, which resulted in eight trafficking prosecutions.
- **Numbers of victims:** The government identified 455 trafficking victims in 2017 (824 in 2016), including 336 sex trafficking victims (335 in 2016) and 119 labor trafficking victims (489 in 2016).

**Vietnam:**

- The court system secured 244 convictions for trafficking offenses in 2017 (275 in 2016).
- Vietnam Border Guards and Vietnamese diplomatic missions identified 350 trafficking cases involving more than 500 alleged offenders. Authorities reported identifying 670 victims within Vietnam. MoLISA operated a 24-hour hotline for trafficking victims in 2017, and authorities reported receiving approximately 2,700 calls to this hotline during the year. The government reported repatriating 138 Vietnamese trafficking victims from abroad.
ANNEX III: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

CAMBODIA

COUNTRY PROFILE

This report examines gender issues in the Cambodian economy, especially in agriculture, business development, and employment.

This assessment contributed to the development of USAID/Cambodia’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for 2011–2015. It identifies and makes recommendations for gender issues in multiple sectors.

In this working paper, the authors introduce a Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Progress Index to assess countries’ progress toward MDG targets.

This report discusses attitudes about gender relations in Cambodia and recommendations of the Cambodia Gender Assessment conducted in 2014 by the Royal Government of Cambodia and partners.

This report examines Cambodia’s labor movement and trade unions.

UNDP. Rapid Integrated Assessment – Cambodia SGD Profile, 2016.
This report presents findings from a rapid integrated assessment of Cambodia’s National Strategic Development Plan 2014–2018 and relevant sector plans and strategies against the SDG targets. It provides a gap analysis of the SDG targets.

This report assesses Cambodia’s gender terrain. The assessment is based on a review of information from government, donor, and NGO sources and from extensive consultations with various stakeholders.

Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN), the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Women’s Inclusion in REDD+ in Cambodia: Lessons from Good Practices in Forest, Agriculture, and Other Natural Resources Management Sectors. September 2013.
This report examines challenges and barriers to women’s inclusion and the integration of gender perspectives into REDD+ in the Asia-Pacific region, identifies practical entry points,
analyzes good practices, and shares knowledge through multisectoral and stakeholder dialogues for the replication of successful outcomes.

**ENERGY**


This report presents and discusses data on energy access in urban and rural Cambodia.


Review of progress in gender mainstreaming in Cambodia, including findings from the 2014 MoWA gender assessment.


This white paper discusses women’s status in the energy sectors of the focus nations to inform the program’s Gender Implementation Plan. Topics include women working in utilities, power generation, distribution and transmission, regulatory bodies, the private sector, and CSOs and NGOs.


This report discusses ways to empower women and promote gender equality in Cambodia by building on skills women possess through traditional occupations.

**TRADE**


International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT database. Available at: [https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS)


The CSES outlines living conditions in Cambodia, covering health, education, housing conditions, economic activities, victimization, vulnerabilities, and other areas.


This study examines socioeconomic and cultural obstacles to women’s entrepreneurship in Cambodia.
World Development Indicators. GDP per capita (constant LCU).

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**


This case study presents results of the ADB-supported Tonle Sap Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project in Cambodia.


This report presents strategies to integrate gender into implementation of a REDD+ forestry management project.


This report presents findings from the 2014 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey on population, health, and nutrition programs.

Wildlife Alliance. [https://www.wildlifealliance.org/empower-cambodian-women-for-the-environment/](https://www.wildlifealliance.org/empower-cambodian-women-for-the-environment/)

Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN), the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). *Women’s Inclusion in REDD+ in Cambodia Lessons from Good Practices in Forest, Agriculture and Other Natural Resources Management Sectors*, September 2013.

This report examines barriers to women’s inclusion and integration of gender perspectives into REDD+ in the Asia-Pacific region and discusses strategies to address them.

**HEALTH (MALARIA, HIV/AIDS, EMERGING PANDEMIC THREATS)**


This literature review defines MMPs in Cambodia and discusses infection risks and intervention strategies.


The study examines risk factors for HIV infection among transgender women in Cambodia.


This report investigates root causes of violence against women in Cambodia.

This report examines policies for preventing and managing malaria in pregnancy in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand.


The report examines progress in Cambodia’s response to HIV and AIDS from 2012 through 2013.


This study examines LGBT exclusion in urban and rural Cambodia.


This report analyzes social and legal conditions that affect LGBT individuals in Cambodia.

**VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND CONFLICT**


The report reviews the historical context and present conditions of violence in Cambodia.

**Cambodia. Accord 5, Safeguarding Peace: Cambodia’s Constitutional Challenge.**


This report discusses constrains to women’s political participation and leadership.

**USAID. Women’s Leadership as a Route to Greater Empowerment. Cambodia Case Study.** Washington, DC: USAID, 2014.

This report from the Women in Power learning project examines the barriers to women’s political empowerment and presents recommendations to address them through USAID programs.

**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

Global Slavery Index, *Global Slavery Index 2016.*


This annual report assesses countries’ progress in eliminating trafficking in persons and makes recommendations to further their efforts.

**WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING**


**USAID. Cambodia Gender Assessment.** USAID/Cambodia, September 2010.
HIGHER EDUCATION AND YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT


Presentation of gender trends in Cambodia related to economic empowerment, education, health, demographic, public decision making and politics, and poverty.


Analysis of national gender trends in education.


Database of statistics and indicators related to education in Cambodia.

KEY STATISTICS


This report presents HIV/AIDS estimates and projections, conducted by the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology, and STDs.


This study presents survey findings on HIV status and risk behaviors among urban MSM in Cambodia.


This study assesses gender trends related to women’s political participation in Cambodia.


Key gender data for 2013–2014 from the Cambodia Ministry of Youth and Education.


A global report on the progress and challenges in addressing AIDS globally and in Cambodia.


Factsheet with data and indicators on female political participation in Cambodia.

This newsletter provides information on HIV/AIDS in Cambodia.


This study examines HIV prevalence and risk among transgender individuals in Cambodia.

### CHINA

#### OVERVIEW


#### TRADE


This study examines how global supply chain trade has increased women’s income and reduced the sex imbalance.


The report suggests that women’s rising employment in trade has increased women’s awareness of rights but also emphasized gender differences and wage discrimination.

#### NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT


This report discusses land contracts to rural households as part of forest land tenure reform in China, focusing on gender-related socioeconomic benefits.


The article reviews environmental issues in China, focusing on the conflict between economic growth and depletion of natural resources.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION

This report presents information on technical and vocational education in China, including policies and recommendations.


This article argues that there are few women in leadership positions in higher education in China. This situation is driven by female desire to not assume leadership positions because the concept of leadership deviates too strongly from traditional gender stereotypes of women.

LAO PDR

OVERVIEW


This report lists the issues presented by Lao PDR to CEDAW, including gender equality, access to justice, violence against women, stereotypes, harmful practices, trafficking, education, employment, health, disabilities, rural women, migrant women, and disaster risk reduction.


This reference guide supports disaster management in Laos, providing information on Laos’s plans, policies, and capabilities of Laos, including in rural areas.


This report analyzes violence against women and states that lack of data and funding hinder efforts to address the problem.


This report analyzes UN work in Lao PDR, addressing health, education, employment, poverty, food and nutrition, gender, and human rights. It argues for new SDGs with more measurable targets.


This report argues that gender equality is necessary for continued economic progress in Laos. The report addresses health, education, violence, employment, natural resource management, climate change, and trade.

ENERGY

This report describes the World Bank’s Power to the Poor program (P2P), which expanded electricity access for poor and female-headed households in Lao PDR.


This report reviews Lao PDR’s energy environment in its policy and socioeconomic context.


TRADE


NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT


This report details the country’s 2020 strategy in which its goal in forestry conservation work will involve women and recognizes the importance of gender mainstreaming in its work.


This report analyzes women’s contribution to agriculture in Laos.

HEALTH (HIV AND MALARIA)


This report addresses discusses development issues concerning rural poverty in Lao PDR.

VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND CONFLICT


This report assesses the current HIV/AIDS situation in Lao PDR.


This report assesses Lao PDR compliance with CEDAW in its treatment of Hmong women in various regions.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING


This annual report details Lao PDR’s progress in addressing human trafficking and assigns the country Tier 3 status, indicating it does not meet minimum standards for compliance and is not striving to do so.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT


This report examines child labor and youth employment in Laos; it finds high unemployment among youth despite strong economic growth.


This report discusses challenges and opportunities in empowering women in employment, education, finance, law, and other sectors.

This report analyzes gender, disability, and sociocultural factors in Lao PDR, addressing and providing recommendations for health, education, family and household, labor, transportation, and civil society.

**MYANMAR**

**COUNTRY PROFILE**


This report analyzes women’s political participation and leadership in Myanmar peace building and conflict resolution.


This report discusses the status of women in the Myanmar peace process.


This report discusses policies on preventing violence against women and advancing gender equality in Myanmar.

Gender Equality Network monthly meeting minutes (March 2018).

Information on advances in and challenges to women’s empowerment in Myanmar.


This report analyzes poverty and living conditions in Myanmar.


This publication presents progress in and challenges to gender equality in Myanmar.


This report discusses implementation of the National Strategic Plan.

This report discusses women’s participation in the Myanmar peace process and strategies to promote it.


This report ranks countries based on gender equality in economic, health, education, and political spheres.

**ENERGY**


This report provides data on access to energy.


This fact sheet discusses gender trends in bioenergy.


This report provides data on living conditions in Myanmar.


This report assesses gender issues in energy access and presents recommendations to address challenges.


This report provides data on indoor air pollution and health in Myanmar.


This report presents findings on poverty and living conditions in 2015 and proposed a revision of poverty measurement methods to reflect current living standards.

**TRADE**

This report discusses the impact of trade reform on gender equality.


**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Article 350 of the Constitution of Myanmar


Belton et al. *Rural Transformation in Central Myanmar: Results from the Rural Economy and Agriculture Dry Zone Community Survey*. 2017. This report presents survey findings on gender issues in agriculture, including climate change.


Data portal containing statistical data and indicators related to development sectors (land and property rights).

This report discusses gender issues in property rights and resource governance.

The report examines challenges related to social inclusion of various groups and reviews programs and policies to address these challenges.

**HEALTH (MALARIA, HIV/AIDS, EMERGING PANDEMIC THREATS)**

Findings for the *Behavioural Surveillance Survey 2007*.

This report presents survey results on HIV infection in Myanmar.

This report documents abuses and forced displacement of Burma’s Kachin State.

This report discusses the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Myanmar.

This article examines the gender roles linked to division of labor and potential exposure to mosquitoes and malaria prevention activities.

HIV estimates and projections for Myanmar.

Review of epidemiological data on HIV in Myanmar.

This report includes discussion of reproductive health and gender in Myanmar.

This report discusses gender trends in malaria infection in Myanmar.

VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND CONFLICT


TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS


This report presents data on women’s participation in peace building in Myanmar.

WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING


The article analyzes data on the sale of wild cat parts and discusses wildlife trafficking in Myanmar.


This report investigates the illegal trade of ornamental orchids in Thailand, Lao PDR, and Myanmar.


This study provides data on elephant mortality and wildlife trafficking in Myanmar.


This report discusses challenges to addressing elephant poaching and the illegal ivory trade in Myanmar.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT


Education data and statistics, including gender-specific data and indicators.


This report discusses education trends (including gender data) in Myanmar.


This report addresses the situation of children in Myanmar in development areas such as education.


This thematic report on gender issues across the development sectors in Myanmar includes statistical data from the Census.


**INTERSECTIONALITY FINDINGS**


This report discusses strategies to reduce extreme poverty in Myanmar.

**THAILAND**

**COUNTRY PROFILE**

2017 Constitution at Constitute Project (July 31, 2018).


This study examines discrimination faced by LGBT workers in Thailand.


This report provides data on current conditions and long-term trends of human development.
Online factsheet discussing Sustainable Development Goals.

Woralak, Sriyai. Pressure to Move Forward with Gender Equality Bill, Government and Council of State Slammed about Hidden Agenda, 7 Recommendations to Give Space for People of Gender Diversity. Thailand Information Center for Civil Rights and Investigative Journalism.
Situational analysis and recommendations addressing LGBTI individuals in Thailand.

This study presents data on economic and financial outcomes for LGBTI people in Thailand, as well as insights from interviews with diverse LGBTI people from across Thailand.

This report includes gender-specific trends and data from several development sectors.

ENERGY
Online article presenting the challenges related to Thailand’s energy sector transition.


Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency’s website:
http://weben.dede.go.th/webmax/content/executives-0
Data and statistics on Thailand’s energy sector.

This report discusses gender issues and gender equality in renewable energy sectors in Thailand.


TRADE

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
This study examines gender roles and responsibilities in a northeast Thailand suburban community.


This article discusses gender equality and women's participation in water resource management.

**HEALTH (MALARIA, HIV/AIDS, EMERGING PANDEMIC THREATS)**


Online discussion of the progress in addressing malaria infections in Thailand.


This article examines interactions among landscape, humans, mosquitoes, and malaria parasites along the Thailand–Myanmar border.

Sondergaard, Lars M.; Luo, Xubei; Jithitikulchai, Theepakorn; Poggji, Cecilia; Lathapipat, Dilaka; Kuriakose, Smita; Sanchez Martin, Miguel Eduardo; Reungsri, Thanapat; Mohib, Shabih Ali; Chavapricha, Roma; Peamsilpakulchorn, Pajnapa; Arin, Tijen. *Thailand - Systematic Country Diagnostic: Getting Back on Track - Reviving Growth and Securing Prosperity for All (English).* Washington, DC: World Bank, 2016.

This report identifies progress in and challenges to promoting gender equality and social inclusion in Thailand.


Summary of PEPFAR goals and objectives.


Statistical data on the prevalence of HIV infections in Thailand.

UNAIDS. *Feature Story: Thailand Is the First Country in Asia to Achieve Elimination of HIV Transmission and Syphilis from Mothers to Their Children.* (October 27, 2016).
UNAIDS. *Thailand Country Data 2016*. Available at:  
Statistical data on the prevalence of HIV infections in Thailand.

UNAIDS. *Update: Thailand Launches New National Strategy to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2030*.  
September 15, 2017.  
This article discusses the new 2017–2030 National AIDS Strategy.


**VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND CONFLICT**

Online article discussing the causalities of the conflict in Thailand’s most southern provinces.

This report examines gender trends in conflict participation, experiences, and impact in Thailand’s Deep South.

This report examines progress in elimination of discrimination against women in Thailand.

This study aims to further women’s participation in peace building in Thailand.

**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

This textbook introduces main topics in globalization studies.

This article examines experiences of trafficking victims.

WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING


The article examines attitudes toward conservation outside of national parks.


A case study of costs, perceptions, and vulnerabilities around human–wildlife conflict and gender in protected area borderlands from India.


The study assesses gender differences in attitudes about wildlife conservation in a Buddhist community.

Van de Water, A., Matteson, K. “Human-Elephant Conflict in Western Thailand: Socio-Economic Drivers and Potential Mitigation Strategies,” PLOS One (June 1, 2018).

This survey of villages near Salakpra Wildlife Sanctuary found gender differences in attitudes about elephant conservation.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT


Online article discussing gender trends in higher education.


Facts and figures tell an interesting story about gender equality in Thailand.


The book provides information on conditions and challenges in TVET and examines its role in socioeconomic development.

Analysis of the significance of gender equality in Asia, especially in Technical Vocational Education and Training.


This report examines gender in educational stratification in Thailand.


Findings from a pilot study with Thai academic researchers aimed to understanding the complexity of gender and academic career advancement in Thailand.


Statistical data and trends for Thailand.


This Thailand Social Monitor examines the challenges facing Thai youth.

**VIETNAM**

**OVERVIEW**


This report assesses women’s leadership training programs in the public sector in Vietnam. It notes gaps in these programs and makes recommendations for improvement.


This study analyzes and provides recommendations for gender issues in education, employment, violence against women, HIV/AIDS, energy, employment, and trade.

This report examines Vietnam’s response to gender-based violence, noting that the problem is underresearched and underreported.

**ENERGY**


This report examines challenges and opportunities in the energy sector, including renewable energy.


This report analyzes gendered impacts of a rural energy project and efforts to mitigate them.


**TRADE**


This presentation examines the textile sector, including working conditions and wages.


This report examines women’s progress in business in Vietnam.

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**


This report examines gender disparities in land ownership.


This report analyzes gender inequities in land tenure rights and forestry management.

This report argues that the poor, women, and children are most vulnerable to the impact of climate change.


This report analyzes gender impacts of agriculture policies and programs in Vietnam, arguing that men benefit most from agricultural and economic reform.


This report examines the gendered impacts of climate change and argues for women’s central importance in policy to mitigate climate change effects.


This report emphasizes women’s importance and vulnerability to climate change effects.


This report examines women’s employment in agriculture.

**HEALTH**


This report argues that gender inequality contributes to the spread of HIV. In Vietnam, prevention, and treatment and care programs fail to address these inequalities. Social stigma associated with the virus is a significant factor in the inability to successfully combat it.


This report assesses gender disparities in health, employment, and political participation in Vietnam.


This global brief analyzes gendered impacts of and vulnerabilities to malaria.

World Health Organization. *National Malaria Programme Review*. April 2018. www.wpro.who.int/.../vietnam/national_malaria_programme_review_viet_nam_april ...
This report examines Vietnam’s progress toward malaria elimination.

**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**


This annual assigns Vietnam Tier 2 status, indicating it is not in compliance with efforts to eliminate trafficking but is trying to do so.

**WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING**


This report examines bear bile use primarily by men with higher income and education.


This report emphasizes the importance of gender in addressing wildlife trafficking, focusing on Vietnam.

**HIGHER EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**


This report examines the technical and vocational training sector in Vietnam and emphasizes the importance of youth skill training for industrial growth.


This report provides data on Vietnam’s educational system and discusses the gap between higher education and employment opportunities.


This study examines bullying of boys and girls in an educational context in Vietnam.


This report analyzes Vietnam’s progress in addressing gender inequities.


This report examines limitations of gender equality in women’s leadership positions at one university in Vietnam.