Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

# WOMEN AND MEN'S DIVISION OF LABOUR AND TIME-USE

## A COMPARISON OF RICE AND RICE SHRIMP PRODUCTION

SOC TRANG PROVINCE – VIETNAM

CLARA PARK

GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM ON GENDER IN AQUACULTURE & FISHERIES (AUGUST 2016 – BANGKOK)

# Objectives

- Assess and compare women and men's labour inputs to rice rice and rice-shrimp
- Document "visible" and "invisible" work
- Highlight importance of labour to productive system economic returns
- Highlight work burden and access to technologies and related services
- Draw key findings and propose recommendations

# Methodology

- **Selection of sites**: two communities identified with support of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD):
  - Vien An: relies on two rice crops and
  - Hoa Tu1: alternates rice to aquaculture (shrimp)
- Focus on production (not transformation and market access)
- **Sex-disaggregated data collection** ( quantitative and qualitative – at community and household level) through participatory rural appraisal tools and focus group discussions
- **Key informants**: total of 85, divided amongst local leaders (farming associations/women's associations) and individual farmers

# Context

FAO:

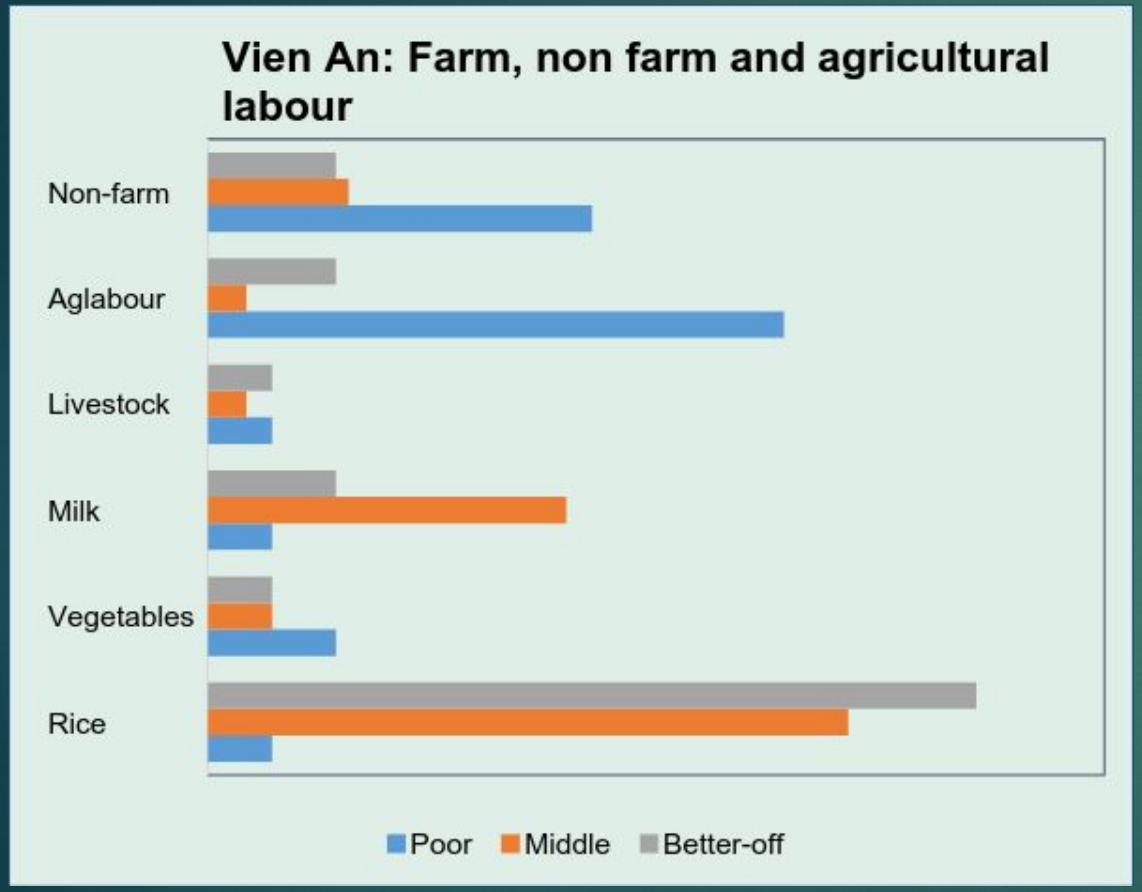
- FAO Regional initiatives: Asia and Pacific Blue growth and Regional Rice Initiative
- FAO's work on women's work burden and labour-saving technologies

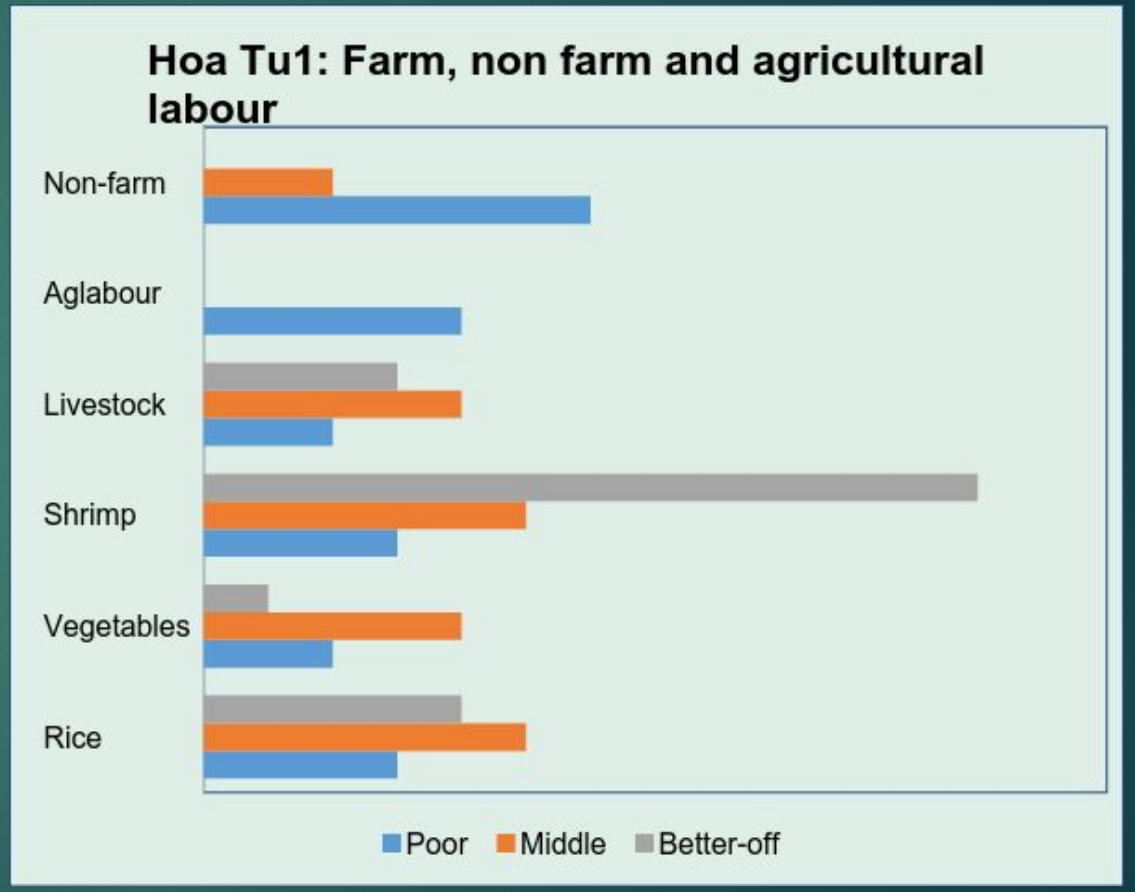
Local:

- Mekong delta small-scale rice and aquaculture production:

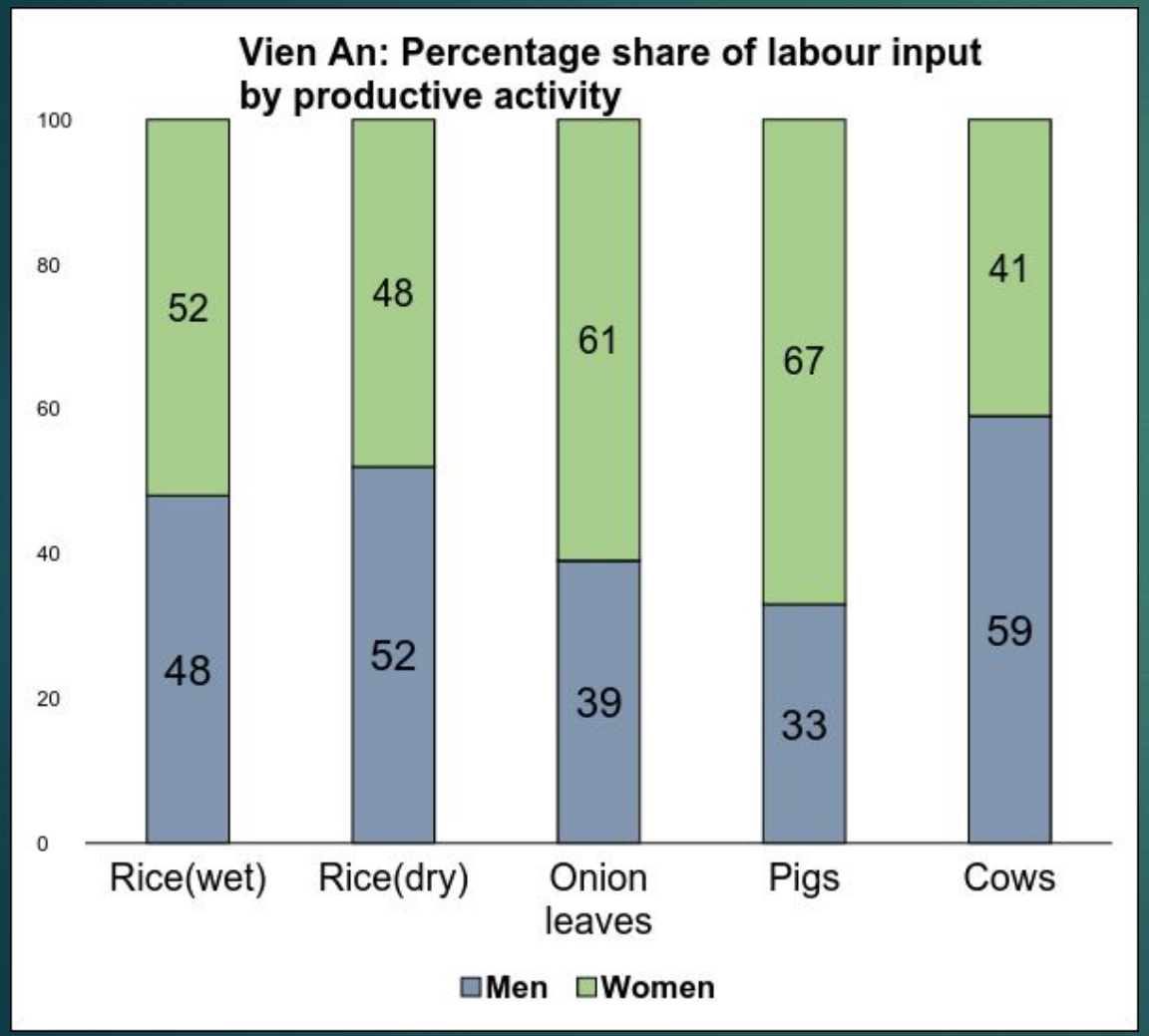
  average farm land of 0.25 – 1.5 hectares
- Same fields  used in the wet and dry season either for rice double cropping (result of improved  rice varieties) or for rice and shrimp.
- Technology & improved agricultural  practices introduced through government extension services

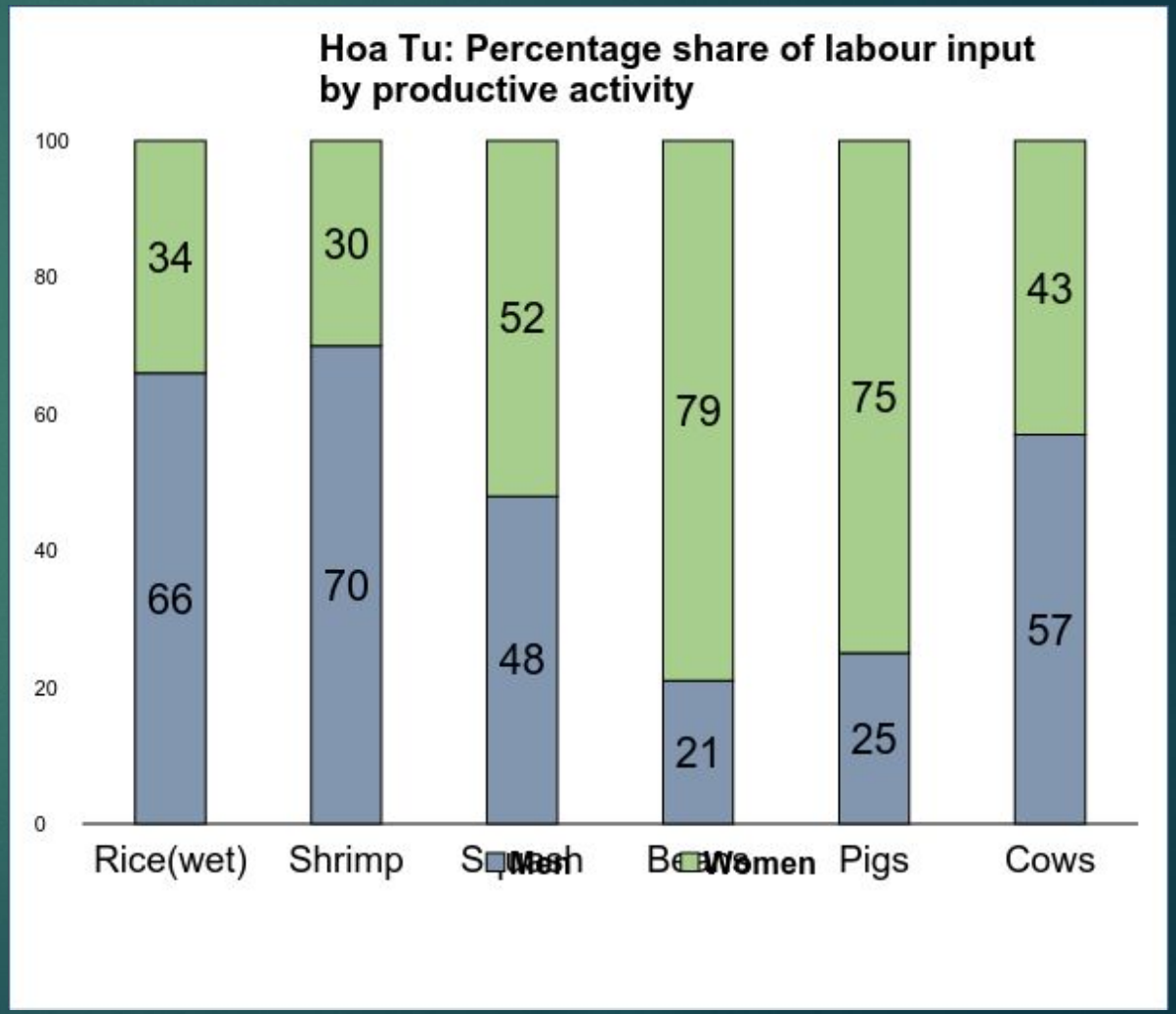
# Context: Income source by wealth group



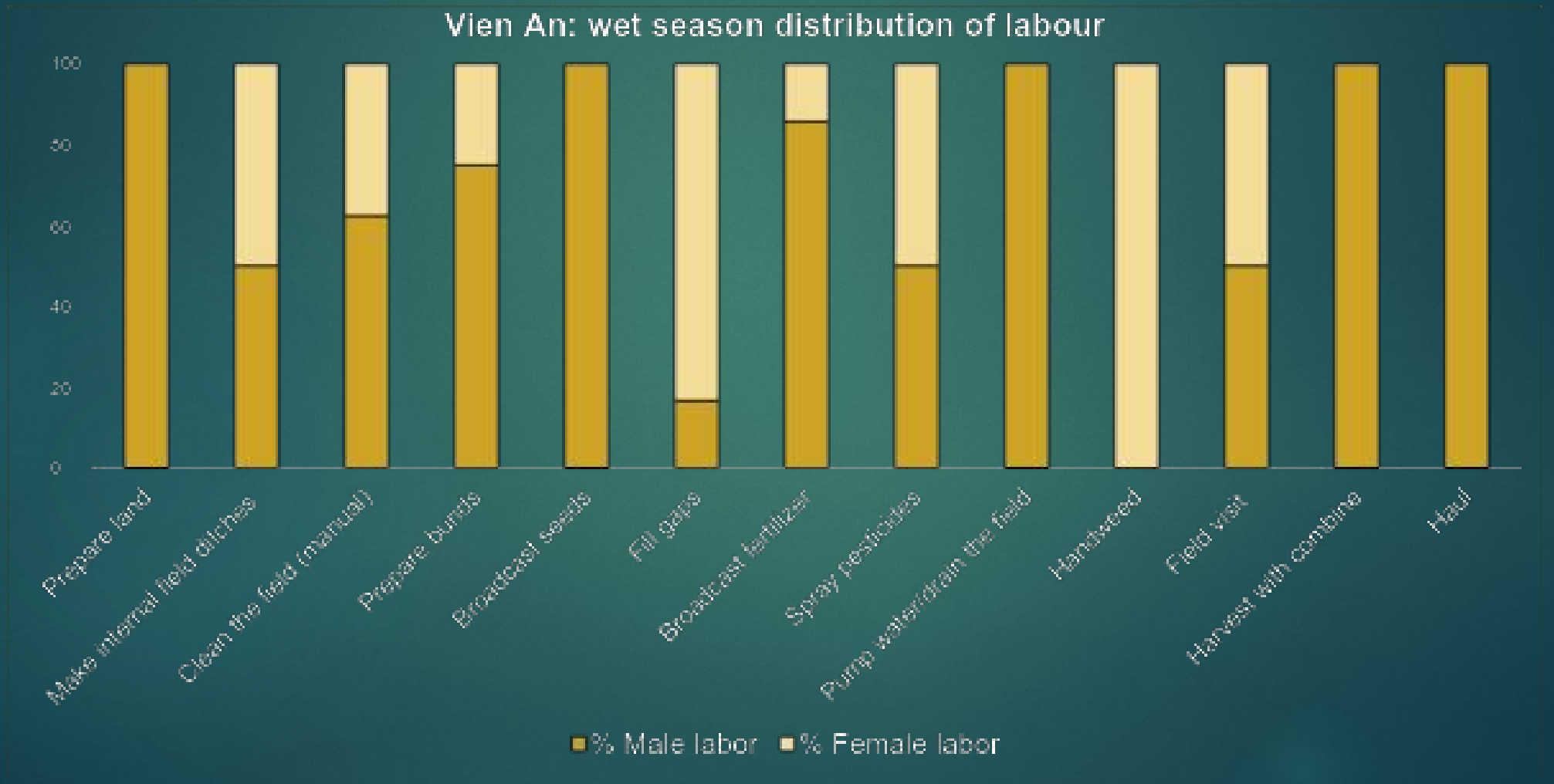



# Finding 1: Livelihoods are diversified and labour inputs vary by productive activity and season

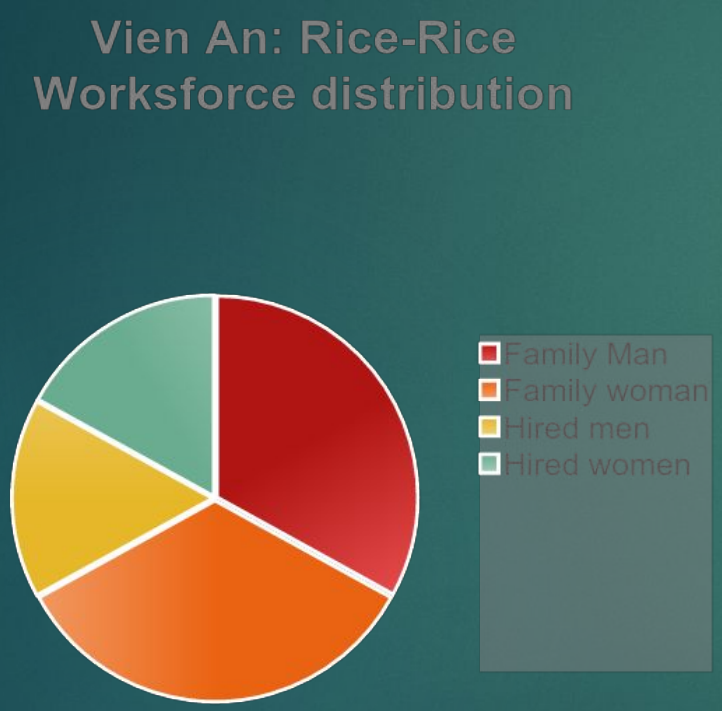


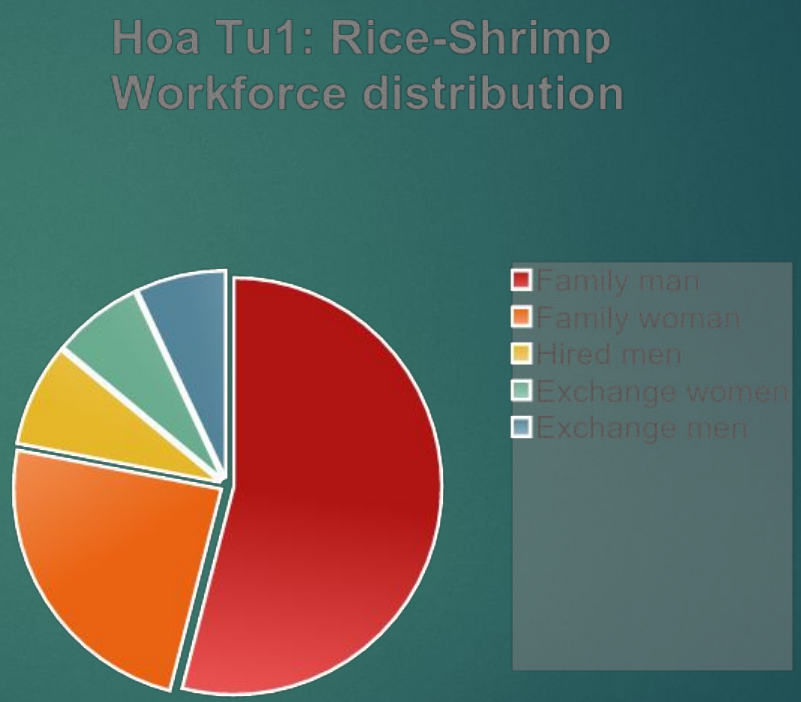



# Finding 2: Women appear to be relegated to more time consuming and manual tasks

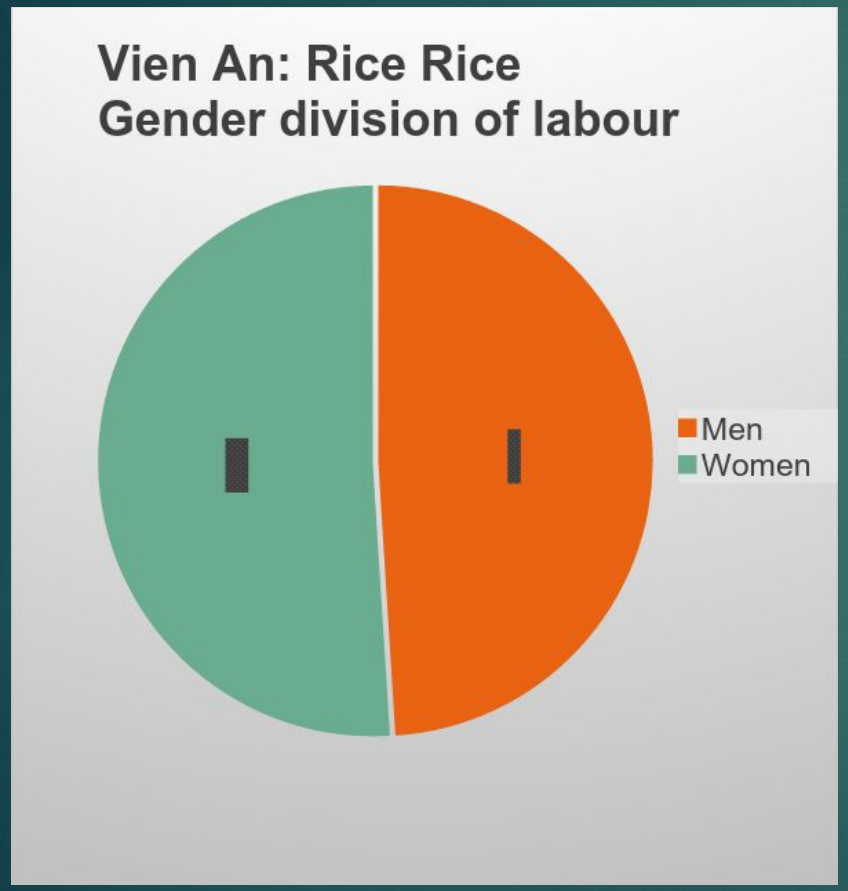


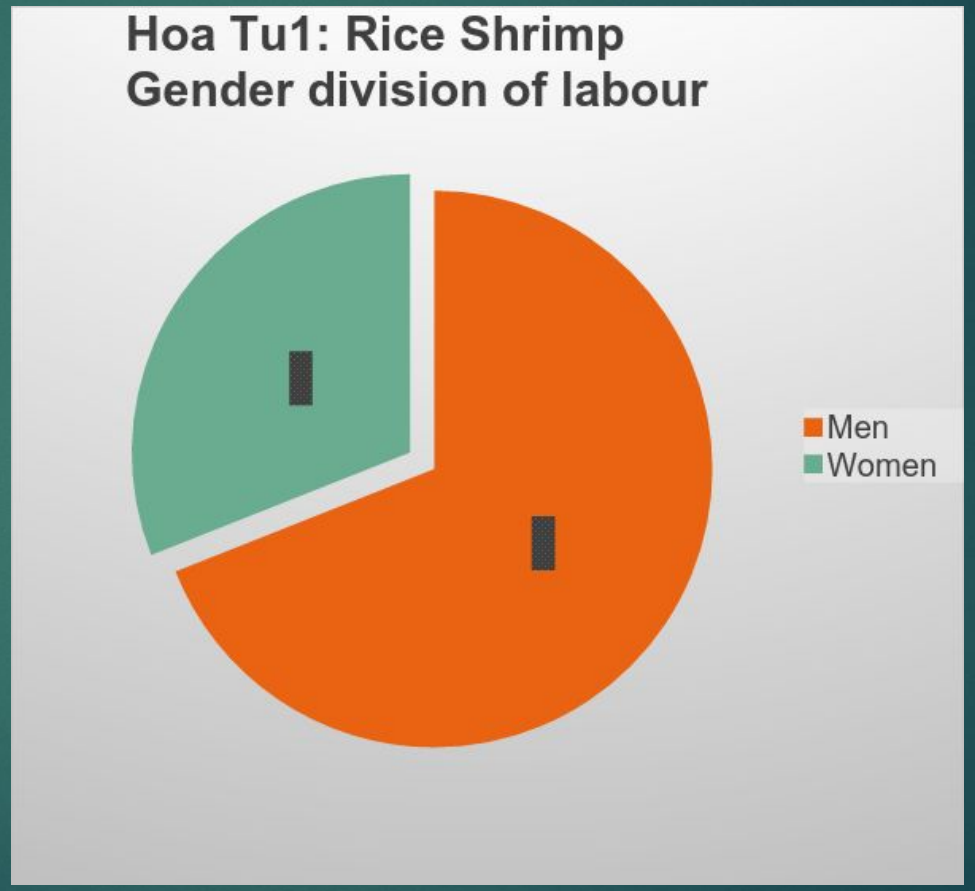
# Finding 3: Rice-shrimp farming is three times more labour intensive than rice rice and relies on a more diversified workforce



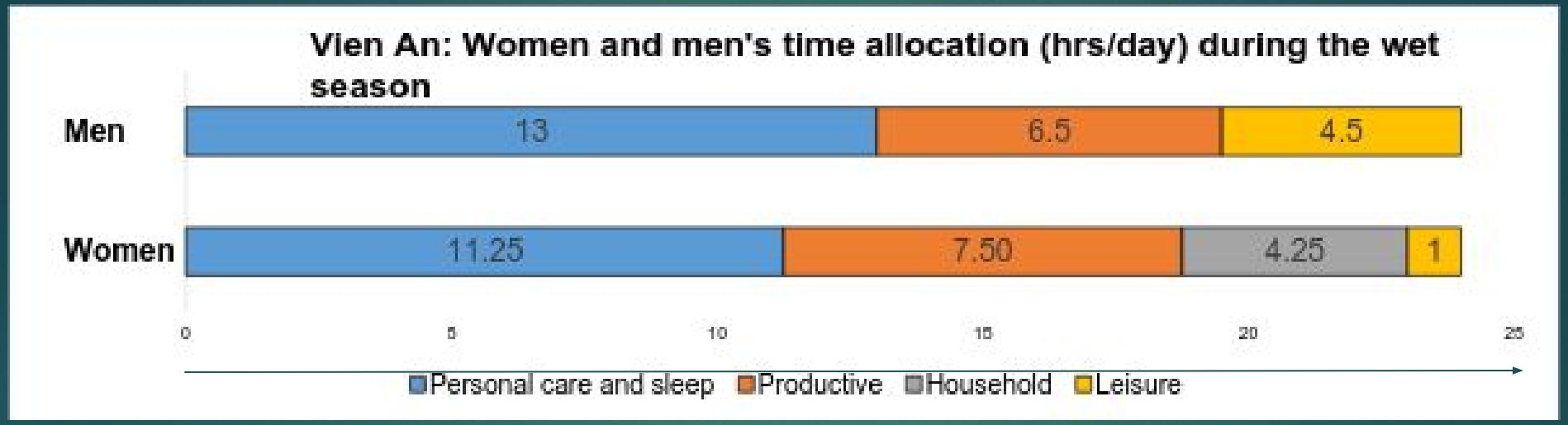



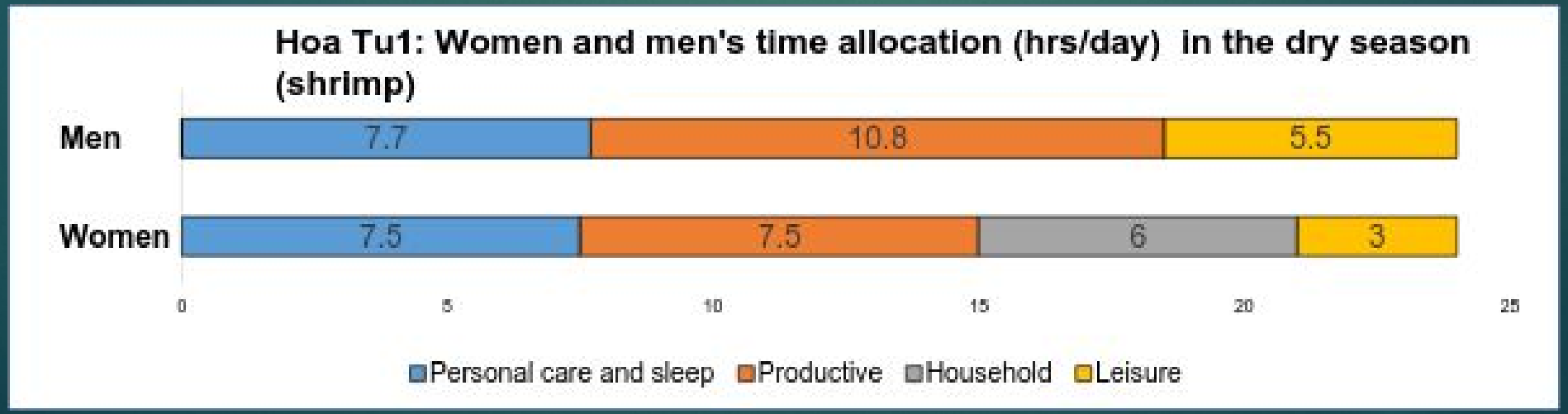
# Finding 4: Women are more engaged in the rice production system than in rice shrimp



# Finding 5: Women are time poor in both production systems (unequal distribution of work between productive and household work)



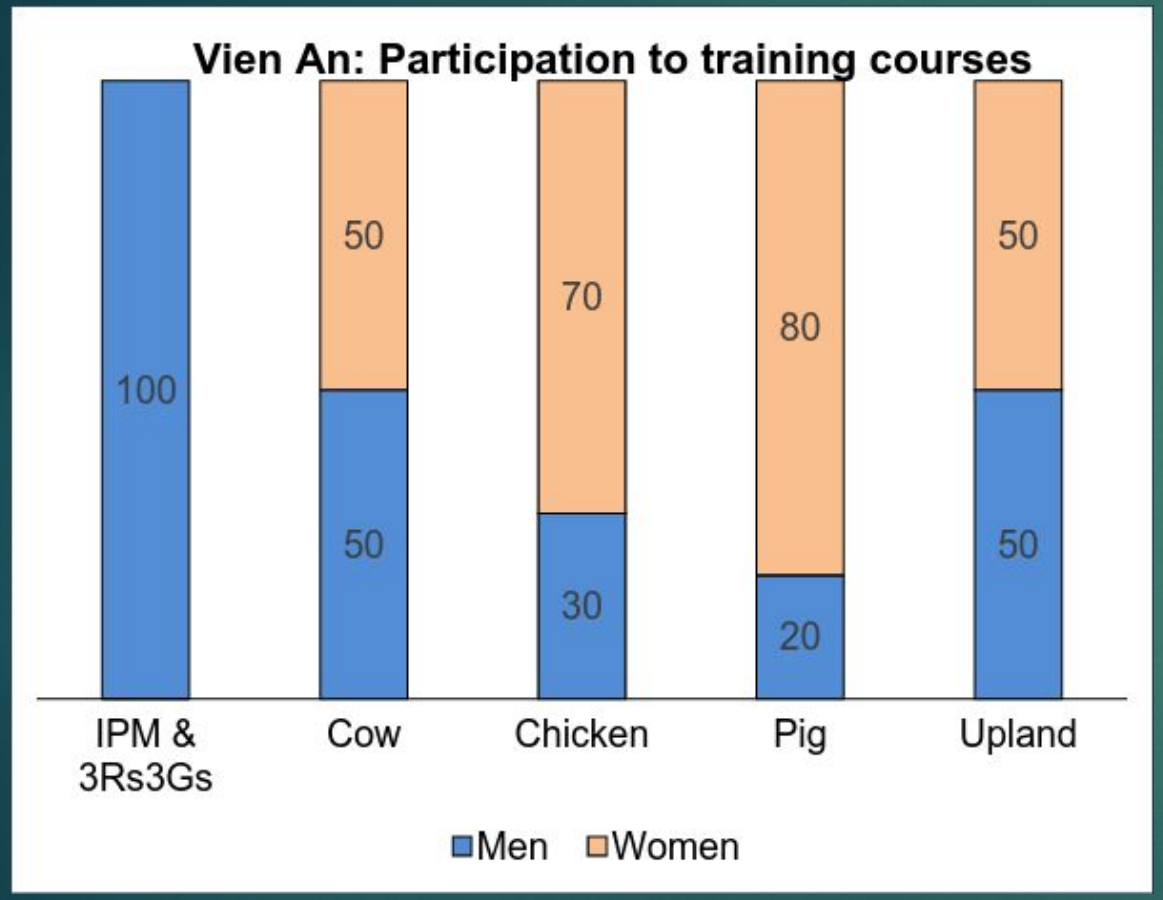
# Finding 6: Economic analysis shows that rice shrimp has only marginal better returns and would be unsustainable without family labour

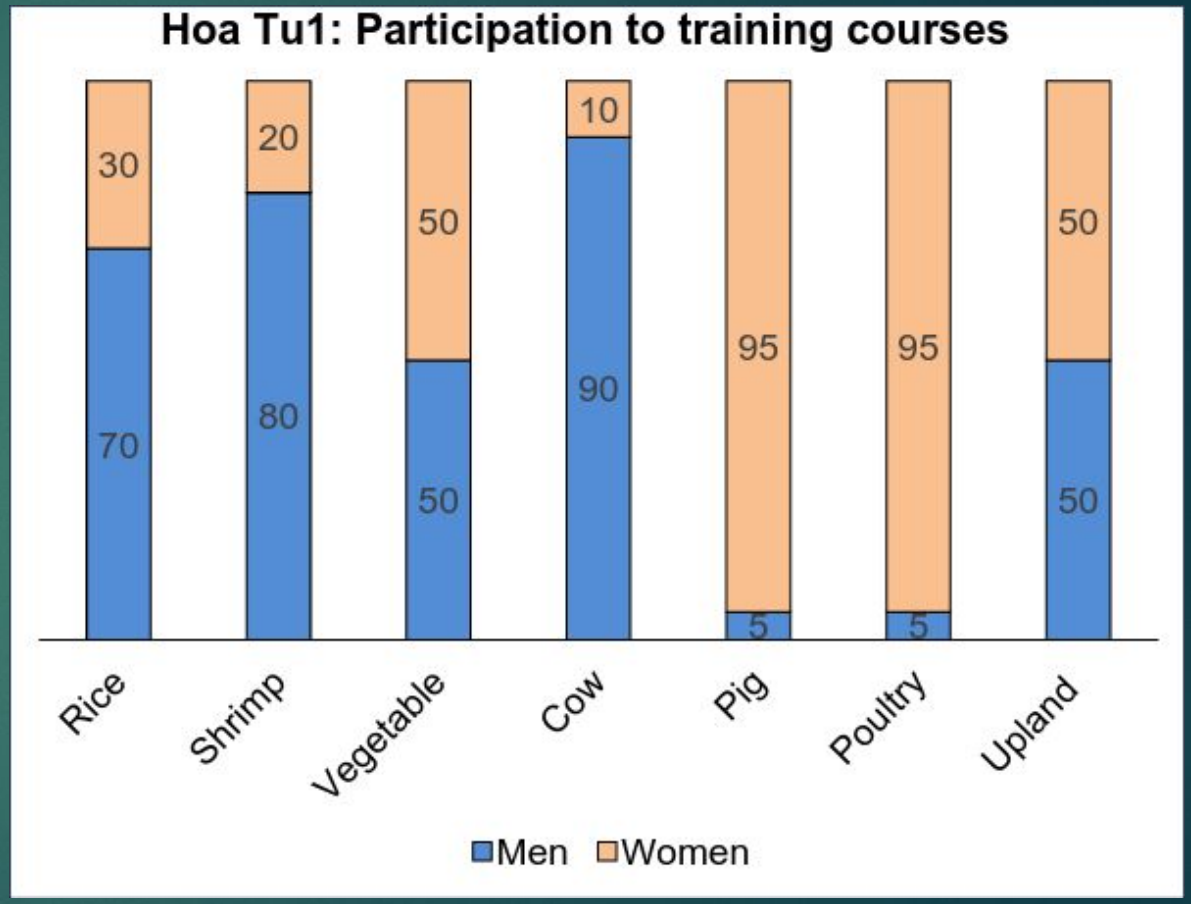
- The cost-benefit ratio in rice rice is 1.42 USD and only 1.56 USD in rice shrimp
- Both labour and material costs are higher for rice shrimp (material costs=1179 USD versus 272 USD)
- 76% of total labour in rice shrimp is family/exchange labour (50% in rice) so farmers would be at a loss if family labour was imputed
- Women's contribution covers 27% in rice shrimp and 24% in rice rice

# Finding 7: The introduction of labour-saving technologies and practices does not always take changing labour patterns into consideration

| Rice technologies & practices | Shrimp technologies & practices |
|---|---|
| Short duration and salinity tolerant **rice varieties** produce higher yields and reduce labour | **Certified shrimp larvae** which are free from disease/spent time in quarantine |
| **"Three reductions, three gains"** (farming practice) was introduced in 2007 and reduces use of seed rates, pesticides and fertilizers, hence reducing labour | **Ventilators** for shrimp culture (increases the oxigen content in water). Need to be switched on and off several times/day but increased production from 500kg/ha to 5000 kg/ha |
| **The combine** (harvester-thresher) can be rented from service providers. It reduces labour use and post harvest loss. | **Mud remover**: invented by male farmer, this is widely used to prepare the land for shrimp farming (reduces labour from 48 to 3 hours per ha) |
| **Gap filling tool**: to pull seedlings and replant them. Invented by a woman and widely used. | |
| **Portable rice threshers** too heavy for women to use but reduces their work in removing straw from fields | |

# Finding 8: Women's access to services and training opportunities is insufficient



# Finding 9: Participation in farm-related production decisions is unequal and does not reflect labour contribution

| **Rice shrimp : Who decides?** Decision taken individually, equally (=) or more by men/ women (>) | Rice production | Shrimp production | Green Beans production | Squash production |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| What variety/crop/breed to use | M=W | M>W | W>M | W |
| Amount of seeds/shrimp larvae to use | M>W | M>W | W>M | W>M |
| Timing and amount of fertilizer/shrimp feed to use | M | M | M>W | W>M |
| Timing and amount of pesticides | M>W | M>W | M=W | W>M |
| Whether to use new technologies | M>W | M>W | M>W | M=W |
| To attend farm-related meetings | M>W | M>W | M>W | W |
| Amount of farm products to keep for home consumption | M>W | M=W | W | W |
| At what price the commodity should be sold | M=W | M | W | W |

# Way Forward

- Collect sex disaggregated data on the division of labour to highlight invisible work & inform agricultural policy development

  **(Tool options: Agrigender statistics tool kit/ SEAGA)**

- Support HH dynamics to encourage discussion on work constraints, choice, sharing of time and access to technologies

  **(Tool options: IFAD/OXFAM Novib/Hivos Household Methodologies & GALS)**

- Support community dialogue with service providers to identify needs and strengthen technology development **(Tool options: dialogue platforms)**
- Train extension agents in gender-related dynamics to ensure they reach those who do the work

# Thank you!