

## GENDER DIMENSIONS IN SHRIMP FARMING: A CASE STUDY OF SHRIMP FARM WORKERS IN THAILAND

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Shrimp farm workers are important actors in the shrimp value chain. In Thailand, the relationship between the shrimp farm owner/operator/manager and the shrimp farm worker is both business-like and familial. They are in constant interaction with each other, mainly for the operation and management of the ponds. There are also interactions related to family and social activities within the shrimp farm setting. Global aquaculture certification schemes cover worker welfare in farms, which shows an emerging consensus of this market-led governance that labour conditions and employee welfare on farms are being considered at the same level as environmental management, animal welfare and food safety for sustainable and ethical production of seafood. However these schemes only refer to the workers themselves and do not extend to the family of the workers who are living with them in the farms.

In this research we have attempted to follow the gender dimensions framework in order to bring out gender related results, which could lead to an understanding of how gender relations affect decision making among shrimp farm workers and their families, as well as their opportunities for advancement and access to information and meeting their needs, and the practices and beliefs that prevail. Eighteen workers (6 female, 12 male), both Thai and migrants, were interviewed face to face in Chanthaburi and Surat Thani provinces, the major shrimp producing areas in Thailand.

Various gender issues still need to be addressed, especially in the area of couple payments, access to opportunities and skills development, social protection and freedom of association.