

GENDER IN RICE-SHRIMP VALUE CHAIN: A CASE STUDY OF GROW-OUT FARMING HOUSEHOLDS IN SOC TRANG PROVINCE, VIETNAM

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This study focused on gender issues in rotation rice-shrimp (*Penaeus monodon*) culture in Vietnam. Focus group discussion was conducted with target farmers and local fishery managers. Secondary data were collected from Soc Trang Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and related studies. Primary data collection was also carried out through direct interviews with shrimp farmers in Soc Trang province through semi-structured questionnaires. This study focused on grow-out actors in the shrimp value chain in the rice-shrimp rotation farming model. Seed, feed and chemicals are the inputs to grow-out shrimp farming. Shrimp produced from these systems is sold to middlemen, wholesalers, in domestic markets or processing plants. In seed production, men were the main actors while women played small roles, such as seed purchasing, cleaning premises and feeding in nursing stage. In shrimp farming, although farming land owners are men, women can involve in the ownership by joining in decision making with important activities such as transaction with banks, contribution in decision of production scale and crop. In case of single women, they are the main decision makers. Men are generally involved with the production and technical aspects, while women are involved in the following: seed transportation, buying shrimp feed, using chemicals in the farm, harvesting, decision making for selling, price negotiation with buyers, money savings and house work. Women play the main roles as middle women/brokers, wholesalers, domestic market traders, in buying and selling shrimp, and as main labour in shrimp processing plants.

In terms of technical and financial indicators, income from shrimp farming is mainly allocated for household expenditures which are executed by women in addition to their reproductive roles. Men make decisions on how to use the finances. Women need to be trained in shrimp culture techniques which will encourage them to be more directly involved in shrimp production, which could empower them further.