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Agro-climate Information Services (ACIS) for Women and Ethnic Minority farmers in South-East Asia

WOMEN AND ETHNIC MINORITY FARMERS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA. Over 70 percent of the populations of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos live in rural areas. Harsh climatic conditions, which are further aggravated by climate change, teamed with poor infrastructure, restrict farming systems and market opportunities. For women and ethnic minority smallholders, the resilience of their livelihoods is often especially restricted by limited resources, inadequate access to information and channels, social, cultural and language barriers, and constrained participation in decision-making at various levels.

ACIS will enable women farmers, ethnic minority farmers and agricultural planners, in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, to better anticipate and respond to risks and opportunities from changes in the weather, through participatory and equitable agro-climate information services.

KEY OUTCOMES



By integrating scientific and local knowledge, a scientifically robust institutional and community-based ACIS system will be developed and tested in 3 countries, ready for scaling up.



Women and Ethnic Minority farmers will have the capacity to understand, demand and seek agro-climate information. Farmers will develop informed plans which will reduce climate-induced crop failure.



Strong research capacity and evidence will be built, including analysis into the efficacy and viability of ACIS, institutional and policy gaps, and the tracking of gender and equity integration into ACIS.



Next-users, such as local authorities, will have access to tailored agro-climatic information and will be able to communicate effectively with ethnic minority and women farmers.



Local government bodies, private partners and local CSOS will be invested in and capable of further developing ACIS at the policy level and within the private sector.

Participants

Agricultural planners and smallholder farmers, with a focus on ethnic minority groups and women

Project Locations

Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos



Partners

- » World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
- » CARE
- » National, provincial and local level government stakeholders and civil society organisations related to agriculture, natural resource and environmental ministries and civil society actors in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos

Timeframe

2015 - 2018

Donors

CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security
World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
CARE Denmark

KEY ACTIVITIES

The ACIS for Women and Ethnic Minority Farmers in South-East Asia project takes a phased learning and implementation approach, to ensure long-term impact; strong foundations are laid from the outset, and learning and adaptation continues throughout.



KNOWLEDGE GENERATION PLATFORM

The knowledge generation platform will work throughout the duration of the project to: identify research and policy gaps for ACIS implementation; monitor and evaluate the project; and communicate the learning outcomes and subsequent recommendations from the project, for the purposes of policy dialogue.



ACTION-ORIENTED CAPACITY BUILDING

Various capacity building methods are conducted with local authorities, CSOs, scientific institutions, the media, and farmers, through Farmer Learning Networks and Gender Champions.

Methods integrate technical topics and facilitation and community engagement skills, with particular attention to advisory development, women's empowerment, and engaging-with-men strategies.



AGRO-CLIMATE ADVISORIES

Agro-climate zoning is the basis for institutional level ACIS for each area, developed via participatory approaches. Local knowledge is actively contributed by gender champions, representing the farmers.



Through learning and feedback loops, agricultural planners and farmers work together to develop and communicate seasonal forecasts and advisories for each zone, linking local and scientific knowledge.



POLICY DIALOGUE FOR SCALING ACIS

At the start of the project, project partners and public institutional ACIS stakeholders jointly agree on a sustainability and scaling strategy, to ensure that the project works towards these long-term goals.

The evidence from the knowledge generation platform is used in ongoing policy dialogue with stakeholders, to ensure both public and private buy-in to equitable ACIS, which is scaled nationally and regionally.



FARMER LEARNING NETWORKS

Gender Champions are selected from existing farmer groups to form a farmer learning network at the agro-climate zone level, playing an important role in knowledge and skill transfer.



Through various social learning processes and action planning, gender champions work with the farmers and agricultural planners to apply and improve the advisories.



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RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

Questions this project will address:

- » How can farmer-managed weather observations improve seasonal forecasting skills?
- » How can collaborative scenario planning enhance responsiveness to weather impacts and reduce crop failures?
- » How can gender and ethnic minority sensitive ACIS lead to resilient livelihoods?
- » What is the cost-benefit of investing in adaptive strategies?
- » What are the incentives and disincentives for ACIS uptake?

World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
Hanoi, Vietnam
T/F: +84 9783 4644/45
icraf-vietnam@cgiar.org
www.worldagroforestry.org

CARE Danmark
Jemtelandsgade 1, 2300 Copenhagen S
T/F: +45 35 200 100/368 878
care@care.dk
www.care.dk



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