

Helpdesk Research Report

Donor action on women's employment in ASEAN countries

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Question

Provide an indicative overview of donors' recent and current attempts to improve women's workforce participation and conditions in states that are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Where possible, provide examples of donors' attempts to address inequity in the workplace and workforce, and to support women entrepreneurs.

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1. Overview

Gender inequality shapes and constrains women's paid and unpaid work in ASEAN member states (ABD & ILO, 2011)¹. In these countries, women participate less in the workforce than men (Hinds, 2014). In addition, women typically work in jobs with poor labour conditions and with less income than men (*idem*)². In the face of this, what have aid donors attempted to improve women's participation and conditions in the workforce?

¹ The ten ASEAN member States are, as of September 2014: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. Source: ASEAN (2014). *ASEAN Member States*. ASEAN. Retrieved from: <http://www.asean.org/asean/asean-member-states>.

² This report is the second of a two-part series on women's employment in ASEAN countries. The first report is: Hinds (2014, forthcoming).

To answer this question, academic, practitioner and policy literature from the past five years was searched. This revealed that very little information is available, suggesting that bilateral and multilateral donors have in fact not significantly acted on this issue.

Isolated **documented cases** highlight some successes, mixed results and failures in donor action.

- **Success** stories include donors acting on women's employment through: national policies (Cambodia); mandatory monitoring of working conditions (Cambodia); gender-sensitive design and evaluation of projects (Viet Nam, Cambodia); capacity development for women's micro and small enterprises (Laos, Philippines); school-to-work transition (Philippines); and creating an enabling environment for rural smallholders (Laos). Donors frequently cited in these cases include the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- Donors have obtained **mixed results** in other programmes about women's employment, such as the promotion of equality and decent work by the ILO (Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Thailand), and border-gate economic zones supported by the ADB (Viet Nam).
- Broader qualitative or mixed-method studies from academic sources offer **critical perspectives** on structural issues with donor-supported action on women's employment.
 - One example from tourism in Laos shows that the **division of labour** can remain gendered and disadvantage women even in pro-poor, community-based development projects (Phommavong & Sörensson, 2012)
 - One example in the agricultural sector in Thailand demonstrates the importance of **combining class, gender, culture, migration and citizenship** for meaningful analyses of women's labour (Latt, 2011).
 - An analysis of women's position in the Malaysian labour market since the 1970s brings to light the **gendered nature of both production and reproduction**, and the contradictions that increased labour participation by women create for gender equality (Elias, 2009).

Donors that have been occasionally active on women's employment include: ADB; ASEAN and the ASEAN Foundation; ILO; the International Organization for Migration; the UN Development Programme (UNDP); and UN Women. Donors that have shown an interest in the issue include: the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development; Food and Agriculture Organisation; OECD; UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; UN Industrial Development Organization; UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; USAID; and the World Bank.

The **structure** of this report was adapted to the limited information available. Section 2 presents the state of knowledge on the issue. Section 3 lays out the more formal knowledge available, i.e. documented cases from peer-reviewed academic studies, independent evaluations and donors' good practices. Sections 4 and 5 map relevant donors, based on whether they have acted on, or examined, the issue.

2. State of knowledge

The literature on donor action is extremely limited³. Overall, available information is **illustrative, not conclusive**.

Very few donors have specifically addressed women as workers and entrepreneurs. Barely any evaluations could be found, be they self-assessments or independent appraisals. There is very little evidence about results and impact.

Available information is largely an **aggregation of single case studies**. There are no meta-reviews, and few comparative or multi-country studies. Findings typically derive from single points of knowledge: single country, single donor, single level of analysis (local, sub-regional, national or regional), and/or single project or programme.

Most information is donors' basic general descriptions of areas of activity, or at most elementary information on projects or programmes (inputs, activities and outputs). Very few of the donor documents are evaluations of outcomes, results or impact. Donor information includes knowledge from quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. There are also a few academic case studies, based on qualitative or mixed methods (no purely quantitative studies were found from academic sources).

Geographic coverage is uneven. Of the ten ASEAN countries, some are mentioned more often (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand), others less so (Laos, Singapore, Viet Nam), and yet others barely or never (Brunei, Myanmar).

Information is often **not disaggregated by structures** other than gender. Socio-economic class, rural and urban settings, and migration status, are considered with some frequency, though not systematically. Nearly all donor documents, and a few academic references, fail to combine a gender lens with analyses of women's age, ethnicity or (dis)ability.

3. Documented cases

Success stories

National policies (Cambodia)

The Cambodian government developed its Decent Work Country Programme (2011–2015) in consultation with employers' organisations, workers' organisations, and the ILO. The government benefited from the resources and collaboration of the ILO. As a result, it included gender goals and policies in its programme for private sector development and employment generation (ABD, 2013: 46). In addition, the ILO will provide technical support to implement the action plan for gender mainstreaming of the Ministries of Labour and Vocational Training, and of Industry, Mining and Energy (*idem*: 79).

³ Other significant bodies of literature about donor action on women's work in ASEAN deal with sex workers and human trafficking. Most of these references do not deal directly with the query at hand.

Mandatory monitoring of working conditions (Cambodia)

The ILO has led Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) since 2001 (ADB, 2013: 45). BFC works through the mandatory monitoring of working conditions in registered Cambodian garment and footwear factories. It assesses them against the standards of the Law on Labour and ILO norms. The monitoring entails unannounced factory visits, direct observation, review of documents, and interviews with workers, union representatives, and management. Syntheses of findings are published quarterly. The BFC also assists employers through human resource management, labour law, and training and resources in dispute resolution (*ibidem*).

The BFC has contributed to ensuring decent work for women, who compose the overwhelming majority of the labour force in manufacturing (*idem*: xvi, 45). While the industry remains ‘low skilled, low paid and hard work’, monitoring has promoted formal production centred on a fundamental set of rights and conditions at work (Dasgupta, Poutiainen, and Williams, cited in ABD, 2013: 45). The process is transparent and credible (*ibid.*). The emphasis is on continuous improvement rather than complete compliance. Mandatory inclusion of all export factories creates a level playing field that contributes to success. However, subcontracting factories are not yet in the monitoring programme (*ibid.*).

Gender-sensitive design and evaluation of projects (Viet Nam, Cambodia)

In **Viet Nam**, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) promoted gender-sensitive design and evaluation to achieve gender-equitable results in government projects (ADB & ILO, 2013: 8). It supported a mass transit project with gender-aware design.

This included targets of 20 per cent construction jobs and 30 per cent station jobs for women. Project staff’s gender capacity was to be enhanced. Spaces were planned for women on platforms and in carriages (with additional space for children and storage), and for businesses owned by women. Infrastructure was to feature secure street lighting around stations and easy access points. Ticketing and schedules were suited to multiple trips and intermodal transport. Marketing would address women as metro users. Lastly, after resettlement of local populations, support for livelihood restoration would pay special attention to female-headed households (*ibidem*).

In **Cambodia**, the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, partnering with the ADB, developed a road rehabilitation project whose design supports women’s employment and capacity-building on gender (ADB, 2013: 45). The project will guarantee equal pay for equal work. Women are to represent at least 30 per cent of unskilled labourers in road rehabilitation, 50 per cent of workers in road maintenance, and 40 per cent of community facilitators in the trainings. All government staff involved will be trained on gender mainstreaming and on social and risk mitigation, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS and human trafficking. Finally, the government will collect sex-disaggregated baseline data on beneficiaries.

Capacity development for women’s micro and small enterprises (Laos, Philippines)

In **Laos**, the ADB has supported a gender-aware project to strengthen technical and vocational education and training, and access to decent work thereafter (ADB & ILO, 2013: 19-21). It aims to improve girls’ capacities in sectors that are not traditionally female: automotive and mechanical repair, carpentry, furniture making, electronics, plumbing and metal work.

The project proposes a social marketing campaign to promote non-traditional skills among girls. It also includes plans to build dormitories and reserve 50 per cent of the spaces for girls. The project sets a 20 per cent quota for girls to be trained in the non-traditional areas of construction, furniture making and

automotive and mechanical repair. Financial stipends are available for girls who train in non-traditional skill areas (*ibid.*).

Training providers have enrolment targets of 40 per cent for girl trainees and 20 per cent for women teachers, with financial incentives. Businesses that employ female graduates will receive a six-month wage subsidy, to support girls' employment after training. The gender targets are to be tracked to create accountability (*ibid.*).

The underlying rationale is that trainings for women in micro and small enterprises should include incentives for households and training organisations to support the training of girls, particularly in non-traditional areas for women (*ibid.*).

In the **Philippines**, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has funded capacity development in support of sustainable women's microenterprises, through a project called 'Gender-Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women' (ABD, 2013: 51⁴). The goal is to contribute to more and better jobs for women and men. The project, led by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), partners with national government departments, national agencies, and local government units to create gender-responsive policies and programs that support women's economic empowerment.

CIDA concluded in 2010 that the project had helped women micro-entrepreneurs better know their economic rights and how to claim them. It had also helped them access services, information and technical support. In addition, it had prepared some Local and National Government entities to better fulfil their duties (*ibidem*).

PCW now has a greater capacity to offer gender-sensitive technical assistance, documentation and useful lessons in enterprise and local economic development to national and local partners (*ibid.*). Nationally, partners have developed gender-sensitive programs and tools. For example, they have created tools about gender-responsive value chains in food processing, bulletins on health and safety, and guides on gender in the workplace. The increase in knowledge has been linked to greater budget allocations for women's economic empowerment (*ibid.*).

Locally, the project has also had a positive impact (*ibid.*). Plans and legislation have become more gender-responsive. The collection of sex-disaggregated baselines has improved. Government and civil society have stronger partnerships to facilitate women's access to services. Women entrepreneurs now have better access to government services, training in business and leadership, business support services, credit, and linkages with local markets (*ibid.*).

School-to-work transition (Philippines)

The Filipino government created a service to assist those leaving high school with job placements, in order to improve their integration into the labour market (ABD, 2013: 75). The programme will provide career counselling, grants for vocational training, and grants or wage subsidies for internships. The programme requires that 50 per cent of its beneficiaries be women by end of 2014. Its 2013 pilot project is supported by the Canadian International Development Agency, and the ILO assisted the government with institutional and capacity development for the pilot (*ibidem*).

⁴ On this case, see also: UNESCAP, 2013: 34-36.

Creating an enabling environment for rural smallholders (Laos)

An independent mixed-method study, commissioned by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, explores two donor-supported projects that successfully supported smallholders in rural Laos (Daley, Osorio & Park, 2013: 42-45). Both projects were alternatives to agricultural investments for contract farmers using their own land, or for permanent employees or casual labourers on plantations (*ibidem*).

In the first project, **funded by the ADB**, the government supported smallholder development through the formation of farmers' groups. It also helped link them to markets. The effects on equity and gender equality seem very positive in local labour and income-generating opportunities. Remaining challenges include women's frequent marginalisation from extension services (also known as agricultural advisory services). This has stemmed from the assumption that their husbands would pass on the training and information to them (*ibid.*).

In the second project, **funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation**, the agricultural extension service has given farmers technical support that is inclusive, gender-sensitive and group-based. Its core activities include participatory needs assessments, the formation of learning groups, the development of village extension workers, practical training, self-assessment, and farmer-to-farmer exchanges. Optional modules can be added. Decision about core and optional services happen from the bottom up. The project has not yet determined how it could contribute to gender-sensitive regulatory frameworks and policies for land-related investments in agriculture (*ibid.*).

Both projects created an enabling environment where rural women and men had sustainable labour and income-generating opportunities. Both strengthened farmers' capacities for production and income generation so they could benefit more from agricultural investments (*ibid.*).

Mixed results

Promotion of equality and decent work (Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Thailand)

From 2008 to 2010, a programme for the promotion of equality and decent work for Asian women was run by the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the ILO, in cooperation with its Gender Bureau. The programme addressed the prevention of human trafficking, the protection of domestic workers, and gender capacity building, in ten Asian countries⁵ (Stearns, 2010).

- **Positive effects**

The overall **delivery rate was high**, an independent evaluation of the programme found (Stearns, 2010: 1-3). Its funding mechanism ('Regular Budget Supplementary Account') was flexible. This enabled the ILO to respond to political openings among constituents through 'multifaceted, responsive programming designs' (*idem*: 3). Its technical assistance thus supported Decent Work Country Programmes as well as principles such as support for worker organisations and gender mainstreaming.

The programme has left an '**impressive legacy**', such as networks, skills, materials and facilitated institutional interventions (*idem*: 3-4). It allowed the ILO to mobilize high regional participation in international standard-setting. It contributed to domestic awareness and policy change on decent work for domestic workers and the fight against trafficking. Examples include initiatives and advocacy on legislation, improved enforcement of local legislation, and the promotion of governmental prevention of trafficking. Translated materials and a pilot network were created on gender mainstreaming. The programme also

⁵ Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

found ways of making short-term funding work for long-term goals (e.g. filling a niche in an ongoing project).

- **Limitations and negative effects**

Some **weaknesses** remained (*idem*: 3-4). For example, the programme combined training, organising and mobilising for domestic workers. It left these workers with a sense of identity, dignity and hope. They also achieved sustained livelihood and safe migration. However, the sustainability of this work was in question. The programme had raised expectations among domestic workers, but did not always have clear plans to sustain inclusion and capacity-building. Other limitations included the continued weakness of data collection on domestic work, trafficking and sexual harassment, and the earmarking of funds.

One **lesson** from the programme is the need for enhanced local gender expertise to implement gender mainstreaming. Another is the ethical importance of sustaining donors' follow-through on initiatives that empower domestic workers and immigrants to mobilise for their rights (*idem*: 6).

Border-gate economic zones (Viet Nam)

In the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)⁶, a great number of women has sought jobs in border-gate economic zones (BEZs) over the past decade (Hung et al., 2010). BEZs are a type of special economic zones in border areas⁷. Hung et al. (2010) examined the factors that influence earnings in BEZs compared to other areas. They collected quantitative survey data at three BEZs and used data from the Viet Nam Household Living Standard Survey.

- **Positive effects**

Hung et al. found that the BEZs and cross-border integration have **increased the job opportunities and earnings** of women workers (*idem*: 66-68). This effect has been large-scale, reaching from local and surrounding areas to cross-border areas and inner provinces thanks to migration (*idem*: 75). Activities in service-related sectors are advantageous to female labour (*idem*: 67). Women workers in BEZs tend to be engaged in higher-skilled jobs, which is consistent with their educational level. BEZs can thus provide them skilled jobs (*idem*: 67).

An important factor is workers' area of residence (*idem*: 70). Women's earnings are 59.6 per cent higher if they reside in urban areas, men's 47.4 per cent. Urban residence may be advantageous because the limited road system in the BEZ region does not let people shorten their commute (*ibidem*).

- **Limitations and negative effects**

However, there are a number of limitations to the positive effects of BEZs. Women's overall low participation in BEZs stems from a lack of adequate skills, physical limitations, low income, insufficient start-up capital, and family care responsibilities (*idem*: 76). Further, asymmetric information leads many disadvantaged women to self-exclude from BEZs: these women do not know that demand for labour exist, or believe that they are not qualified to apply (*idem*: 77).

⁶ Since 1992, Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam have been in a programme of regional economic cooperation, with assistance from the Asian Development Bank and other donors. See: ADB (2014). *Greater Mekong Subregion. Overview*. ADB. Retrieved from: <http://www.adb.org/countries/gms/overview>.

⁷ BEZs differ from special economic zones in three ways. Their special status in terms of free trade and investment is meant to serve development and poverty reduction in the border areas. They are often situated in a poor and less developed region. And they are not strictly target-oriented zones with specific purposes, such as exporting (Hung et al., 2010: 56-57).

Moreover, access to employment has especially been **denied to the more disadvantaged women** (*idem*: 76). Such disadvantage is based on ethnicity, geographic remoteness, lower education, and traditional engagement in agricultural work.

BEZs may increase labour income, but to the **disadvantage of women**: the average income of female workers has fallen behind that of male workers in BEZs, except in one zone (Hung et al., 2010: 66). Involvement in BEZs increases male labour's earnings by 33.7 per cent, and women's by 22.2 per cent. There is no major earning gap outside BEZ activities, but there is one in relation to them: other things being equal, the earnings of male workers are 19.45 per cent higher on average than the earnings of female workers (*idem*: 70).

Male workers gain more from their education and work experience than female ones. Overall, skill level increases earnings by 52.2 per cent, compared to unskilled labour (*idem*: 70). However, one more year of schooling increases men's earnings by 13.85 per cent, and women's by 9.03 per cent. One more year of work experience increases men's earnings by 10.39 per cent, but women's by only 4.16 per cent (*idem*: 68).

In the BEZs, **labour quality for women is poor**. Almost 60 per cent of workers said they had no employment contract and 70 per cent said they were not paid social insurance (*idem*: 68). Issues with women's educational level and skill, job type, and gender equality allow exploitation to occur (*idem*: 76). This has been amplified by the limited number of high-paying jobs, limited demand for skilled labour, and instability of incomes (*idem*: 76). The gap between job opportunities for women and human capital or labour quality are likely to make BEZs areas of exploitation in the GMS labour market (*idem*: 76).

Critical perspectives on structural issues⁸

Gendered division of labour in development projects (Laos)

Even in economic activities meant to produce development and reduce poverty, **divisions of labour** can remain gendered and not lead to gender equality. This is what a qualitative case study about community-based 'ethnic tourism' in a village in northern Laos shows (Phommavong & Sörensson, 2012).

There, a combination of **traditional patriarchy and capitalist production** has marginalised women in a poverty reduction project (*idem*). The authors emphasise that gender and ethnicity must be taken into account together if pro-poor, community-based tourism is to benefit all community members.

For example, since spirit worship is traditionally reserved to men, its use in tourism has meant that patriarchal structures marginalise women. On the other hand, massage, which had traditionally been a sign of hospitality, has turned into a tourism business niche for women. However, women earn significantly less from massages than men do working as guides (a role men have seized because they had a formal education and the right social connections). Tourism is not necessarily a gender equaliser. Viewing it *per se* as a tool for poverty alleviation is a 'neoliberal pro-poor approach which neglects the dimension of equity' (Schilcher, 2007, cited in Phommavong & Sörensson, 2012).

⁸ An additional academic study may be of interest. This in-depth qualitative study looks at the (gendered) legacy of a governmental project of internal resettlement of poor and landless men and women in Indonesia, which major international donors supported from the 1970s to the 2000s: Dawson, G. (2008). *Keeping Rice in the Pot: Women and Work in a Transmigration Settlement*. In Ford, M., & Parker, L. Women and Work in Indonesia (ASAA Women in Asia Series). Oxon: Routledge, 41-60.

Interaction of class, culture, migration and citizenship with gender (Thailand)

Analyses must **combine gender, class and culture with migration and citizenship** to be able to shed light on complex socio-economic processes of labour (Latt, 2011). This is brought to light in a qualitative study about the experience of ethnic Shan migrants from Myanmar who work at a Royal Development Project (RDP) in a village in northern Thailand. The RDP received assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, UNDP and FAO (*idem*)⁹.

Women labourers earn less than men, but not because of lower wages. Shan migrants are not immediately slotted into pre-existing gendered production. Rather, their legal status has constituted an ethnic division of labour, where their characterization as marginal, mobile outsiders is fundamental. Their precarious legal status forces them to become 'hardworking' labourers. This leads to Shan being hired for 'hard' jobs. In the process, the work men can do is associated with the bodily qualities of Shan men. Employers then come to favour men. Shan men are thus more likely than Shan women to be hired and to get more days of work. So the exploitability of Shan labour is shaped not only by culture, gender and class, but also by a contingent experience as migrant (mobile) and precarious/undocumented (non-citizen) bodies (*idem*).

Gender in social relations of production and reproduction (Malaysia)

In Malaysia, **gendered social relations of production and reproduction** have been central to the labour politics of state-led developmentalism and to the policies of many donors (Elias, 2009). From the 1970s, labour markets were crucial to economic reforms centred around 'the construction of 'flexible' and 'efficient' depoliticised and feminised workers' (*idem*: 475). Current ideas on 'competitiveness' through a knowledge-oriented economy have also had gendered roots.

Indeed, the **emphasis on women's role in competitiveness** is part of a transnational policy consensus which has considerable influence in Malaysia (*idem*: 476). In this consensus, major global donors such as the World Bank have largely treated gender in instrumentalist ways. The idea is that women need to participate in the labour force, in formal and informal sectors, to produce 'pro-poor' development. In effect, these are efforts to draw previously 'unproductive' groups of people into the global capitalist workplace to ensure 'competitiveness' (Cammack, cited in Elias, 2009: 477). This risks creating an 'intensification of exploitation' in the reproductive economy (Bakker and Gill, cited in Elias, 2009: 477).

Such approaches have generated particular roles and responsibilities for women, whereby **gender inequalities persist and change forms** (Elias, 2009). The State has emphasised both the productivity and the domesticity of women. In this context, new forms of cheap feminised employment have emerged (e.g. in call centres). They benefit from women's status as a secondary labour market, due to women's centrality in social reproduction, i.e. the gendered social relations centred on households. In addition, transnational migrants increasingly take on socially reproductive work. This has given rise to subordinated and racialised forms of paid domestic employment (*idem*).

⁹ The RDP is a market-based agricultural institution which was founded in 1969 and has expanded since. The Thai nation-State and monarchy have used it politically, to deal with minority populations, opium cultivation and communist insurgencies, and to integrate northern hill territories into Thai capitalist production.

4. Donors with occasional activity on the issue

This rapid literature search identified the following donors as having current or recent engagement with women's work in ASEAN countries. No donor seems to have developed continuous activity on the issue, so the following presents donors that have conducted at least occasional action in this matter. These donors' information rarely elaborates on their action, so the links below offers highlights of their work.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

ADB – Gender and development – Projects and Initiatives: <http://www.adb.org/themes/gender/projects>

See also the references: ADB (2013); ADB & ILO (2011, 2013).

Several **examples** of ADB activities are mentioned in section 3.

ASEAN & ASEAN Foundation

ASEAN Foundation – Project Database:

http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=proj_hr.php&sCatID=0300

Examples

The ASEAN Foundation lists activities from the past 15 years (often without much detail), including¹⁰:

- 'Women, gender and co-operatives in Asia meeting challenges and identifying opportunities'. The implementing agency was the Asian Women in Co-operative Development Forum (AWCF), based in the Philippines¹¹.
- Building the capacities of women entrepreneurs and exploring opportunities for micro-enterprise development for co-operatives in Southeast Asia. The implementing agency was AWCF¹².
- Regional exchange programmes to support the economic empowerment of women as an important dimension of gender equality (ASEAN Foundation, n.d.: 2).
- Workshop on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for the economic empowerment of women. The implementing agency was the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, in the Philippines¹³.
- Increasing the participation of ASEAN women farmers/leaders in the activities of the International Federation of Agriculture Producers, which was the implementing agency¹⁴.
- Promotion of 'One Village, One Fisheries Products' system to improve the livelihood for the fisheries communities in ASEAN region (this included a gender dimension). The implementing agency was the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, in Thailand¹⁵.

¹⁰ Sources for the following information are: ASEAN Foundation (n.d.); the ASEAN Foundation Project database (http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=proj_hr.php&sCatID=0300).

¹¹ http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=proj_detail_newcat.php&sProjID=023&sCatID=0200

¹² http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=proj_detail_newcat.php&sProjID=092&sCatID=0300.

See also: ASEAN Foundation (2009).

¹³ http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=proj_detail_newcat.php&sProjID=018&sCatID=0200

¹⁴ http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=proj_detail_newcat.php&sProjID=119&sCatID=0400

¹⁵ http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=proj_detail_newcat.php&sProjID=109&sCatID=0400

International Labour Organization (ILO)

ILO – Asia and the Pacific – Gender equality: http://www.ilo.org/asia/areas/WCMS_100172/lang--en/index.htm

ILO – Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch – Technical cooperation projects: <http://www.ilo.org/gender/Projects/lang--en/index.htm>

ILO - Women's Entrepreneurship Development: <http://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/womens-entrepreneurship-development-wed/lang--en/index.htm>

See also the references: ADB & ILO (2011, 2013); ILO (n.d.).

Examples

Current **technical cooperation** includes: access to employment and decent work for women (Indonesia, 2012-2016, with Australia's DFAT); and nutrition security and maternity protection through exclusive and continued breastfeeding promotion in the workplace (Philippines, 2013-2014, with UNICEF and the EU)¹⁶.

On **entrepreneurship**, the United Nations and the ILO are assisting with the implementation of national policies on micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Cambodia (ABD, 2013: 68-69). The policies aim to reduce barriers to creation, to the formal economy, and to microfinance (*ibidem*).

Several examples of activities by the ILO are mentioned in section 3.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

IOM - Gender and Migration: <http://www.iom.int/cms/iom-and-gender>

Example

In **Viet Nam**, IOM provided technical assistance in phase 2 of the ADB's Central Mekong Delta Connectivity project (new road infrastructure in the Mekong Delta). It worked to reduce women's vulnerability to risks associated with mobility along the new route. It provided training and information on gender equality, labour rights, reproductive health and trafficking. It also offered women vocational training in locally marketable skills, and assistance to establish livelihood or find employment. Lastly, it worked with local authorities, employers and families towards sustainable support for women's income opportunities and gender equality¹⁷.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP Asia-Pacific – Inclusive development – Other useful resources for gender and macroeconomic issues: <http://www.inclusivedevelopmentasiapacific.net/node/587>

UNDP – Women's economic empowerment: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/focus_areas/focus_gender_and_poverty/women_s_economicempowerment/

¹⁶ <http://www.ilo.org/gender/Projects/lang--en/index.htm>

¹⁷ http://www.iom.int.vn/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=312&Itemid=1

Example

In **Cambodia**, one goal of the Partnership for Gender Equity III (2011-2015) is for women with small businesses to have increased access to gender-sensitive business development services¹⁸.

UN Women

Knowledge gateway for women's economic empowerment: <http://www.empowerwomen.org/>

UN Women – Asia and the Pacific – Women, Poverty & Economics:
<http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/women-poverty-economics>

On economic issues, the topics of action of UN Women in the region are: economic opportunity, gender-responsive budgeting, migrant workers, and women's land and property rights.

Example

'**Lao Women's Economic Empowerment in Pakthaep**' has helped revive traditional skills in textiles in a village. Women have an opportunity to earn from and manage a successful cottage industry. They can build their skills in every aspect of it, including making, marketing and selling products. The project seeks to control as much of the value chain as possible to increase direct revenue to the village¹⁹.

5. Other donors with potential relevance

The rapid literature search conducted for this report also identified the following donors as being potentially relevant contacts, in that they have looked into women's work in ASEAN countries. This is evidenced by their publications that describe the state of women's employment, hint at possible paths for action or offer toolkits. However, these donors seem to have stayed at the stage of documentation, without running projects or programmes on the issue in the past 5 years.

Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD)

DFATD – Equality between Women and Men – Examples of projects: <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/JUD-31111120-LSV>

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

FAO – Gender – Projects: <http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-projects/gender-projectsarc/en/>

FAO – Gender – Resources – Publications: <http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-resources/gender-publications/en/>

OECD

OECD – Gender equality and development – Women's economic empowerment:
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/womenseconomicempowerment.htm>

¹⁸ <http://open.undp.org/#project/00061041>

¹⁹ <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/women-poverty-economics/economic-opportunity>

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

UNESCAP – Social development – Gender equality: <http://www.unescap.org/our-work/social-development/gender-equality>

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

UNIDO – Women and youth in productive activities: <http://www.unido.org/en/what-we-do/poverty-reduction-through-productive-activities/women-and-youth-in-productive-activities.html>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

OHCHR – Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/WRGSIndex.aspx>

OHCHR – South-East Asia Regional Office:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/SouthEastAsiaRegionalOffice.aspx>

USAID

USAID – Gender equality and women's empowerment – Addressing gender in programming – Supporting women's economic growth and education: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment/addressing-gender-programming/supporting-womens>

World Bank (WB)

WB – Gender and development – Female entrepreneurship:
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/0,,contentMDK:23392638~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:336868,00.html>

WB – Gender – Projects – East Asia and Pacific:
http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/projects/all?regionname_exact=East+Asia+and+Pacific&qterm=

International Finance Corporation [IFC] – Gender at IFC:
http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/Topics_Ext_Content/IFC_External_Corporate_Site/Gender+Secretariat

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