

Gender and the management of climate-related risks in northern Thailand

Phimphakan Lebel^a, Louis Lebel^{a,*}

^a *Unit for Social and Environmental Research, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand*

ARTICLE INFO

History:

Draft: 2 Nov 2015

Full draft. *In prep.* For proposed special issue of Int. J. Soc. Sci.

Keywords:

climate change,
aquaculture,
gender
agriculture
culture
ethnicity
adaptation

ABSTRACT

In much past research on the sustainability of natural resource management and rural development, gender was either ignored or women essentialized as care-takers or victims. Recent programs on disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change seem to be retracing these myths. There is a need for more research on how gender influences risks. This paper draws on a set of studies to critically explore the influences of gender on climate risk management by farming households in northern Thailand. We find that women fish farmers perceived greater climate-related risks to profits, and this corresponded with attaching greater importance to risk management practices at the farm and community levels. Women and men crop farmers had very similar perceptions of changing drought risks. Research on the roles of women in community-level water management, and gendered social norms, however, suggests that it will often be more challenging for women to reduce risks to their farms at the larger scales than it is for men. Differences in climate-related risk management beliefs and practices cannot be explained by gender differences in attitudes towards risk; consideration of emotions, gender norms and culture offer alternative, but still partial, explanations. This study shows that gender can influence risk-taking and decision-making and therefore should be taken into account when strengthening climate risk management practices or designing adaptation interventions.

* Corresponding author