



**International Online Training Program**

**Promoting Gender Equality and Women  
Empowerment:  
Sharing Thailand's Experiences and Practices**



**Title:** Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: Sharing Thailand's Experiences and Practices

**Proposed Period:** June 7-18, 2021

### **Background and Rationale**

Gender Equality is an immutable priority of the 2030 global development agenda. The SDG 5 explicitly mentions its target to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". It is also a catalyst to achieve other 16 SDG goals. Gender equality exists when both men and women have level playing fields with equal rights and social value as well equal access to resources and opportunities to use them. It is an established fact that countries with high gender equality perform better in overall political, economic and social development. The year 2018 heightened the Me-Too movements which denounced gender-based exploitative behaviors. While a lot of countries have instilled gender equality acts to eliminate discrimination, much still remains to be done to reduce gender disparity in practices. The ILO survey in 2017 showed that less than 1/3 of women are holding management position, and only 23.4% are representing in parliaments. On top it, 1 in every 5 girls is still experiencing gender-based violence. To move towards to a more equitable society, it is crucial to empower women by promoting their ownership and access to assets, resources and services. It is also equally important to remove legal and cultural impediments undermining women's participation and representation in public life.

Thailand has been increasingly paying attention to gender equality whilst moving toward itself as a nation of Stability, Prosperity and Sustainability. Thailand has signed key international instruments on gender equality such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1985 and Jakarta Declaration for the Advancement of Women in Asia and Pacific Region in 1994. The Beijing Platform of Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) provided the national gender action plan. The Thai Government undertook an "Education for All" policy which encourages closing gender gap in the educational sector. It promulgated Gender Equality Act in 2015 to protect everyone from Gender-based Discrimination. Through the establishment of National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family Development, Chief Gender Equality Officers and Gender focal points, gender sensitivity is taken consideration into the national development plans. Even though falling short on the achieving the ideal gender-equal society, the experiences of Thailand would be meaningful learnings for other countries that have committed to gender equality and women empowerment.

Recognizing gender equality as a cross-cutting issue that needs to be mainstreamed in every development programming and planning efforts, Mekong Institute (MI) has been providing a platform share good practices and lessons-learned among government officials and development practitioners working on gender issues. In this regard, MI is proposing a two-week international online training program on "Gender Equality and Women Empowerment:

Sharing Good Practices and Experiences of Thailand". This training program will contribute to the global effort in closing gender gaps and empowering women which is also of the interest of Thailand as a socially responsible nation.

## **Objectives**

The ultimate goal of the training is to contribute to advancing gender equality by sharing good practices and lessons learned. At the end of the training it is expected that the participants will be able to

- Improve their knowledge on means and tools to increase women's participation and representation in society;
- Demonstrate their understanding on gender-sensitive public policies, regulations and services; and
- capture good practices and lessons-learned to transfer back to their home countries.

## **Course Contents**

The training program is proposed to cover the following modules.

### ***Course Outlines:***

#### **Module 1: Women's Empowerment and Sustainable Development Goals**

This introductory module will set the context by spelling out the importance of women empowerment in achieving the SDGs. Subsequently, the module will review gender gaps in four main defined areas such as economic participation and opportunity, education attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. It would then reflect key international and regional commitments over protection and promotion of women rights. The participants will then have opportunity to share their countries' efforts and challenges in narrowing gender disparity.

## **Objectives**

At the end of the module, participants were able to

- Enhance their appreciation toward women's empowerment to achieve SDGs;
- Improve knowledge on key international and regional instruments in protection and promotion of women rights; and
- Deepen understanding on the progress and setbacks made by Thailand and countries of participants in combating gender-based discrimination and role of women in society.

## **Scope**

- Women's Empowerment and SDGs
- Important international and regional instruments
- Country's Presentations (Gender Disparity Index)

## **Module 2: Women in Politics**

Thailand was among the first Asian countries that granted the right to vote to women although representation of women in electoral politics is still low. This module will discuss on affirmative measures weighing pros and cons to facilitate women's representation and participation in public life. It will explain the current efforts of Thailand to strengthen position of women in the political sector. The general factors that discourage women leadership in politics such as restrictive laws, cultural practices and other barriers would be identified. Women in decision-making level will be explored in the context of participants' countries. Finally, the module will underscore good practices that empower women's representation and amplify their voices in decision making process.

### **Objectives**

At the end of the module, participants were able to

- Identify the critical factors that undermine effective participation and representation of women in politics;
- Articulate the benefit of women representation and participation in public life;
- Broaden their knowledge on ways to promote women in politics and public life; and
- Capture lessons-learned from Thailand to transfer back to their home countries.

### **Scope**

- Women participation and representation in politics: Opportunities and Challenges
- Factors that constraint women participation and representation in politics
- Gender Quota Systems: Its Impacts and Debates
- Thailand's experiences and international good practices to promote women in politics

## **Module 3: Women in the Economy**

Thailand has high female labour participation rate- 65% from 1990 to 2017. Thai women hold 24% of CEOs and 32% of senior leadership positions according to Grant Thornton's Women in Business 2020 report. The studies found the correlation between increase in women's educational attainment and the supply of the most productive women in the labour market. Additionally, Thailand has been one of four countries in Asia to successfully promote the right to girls' education. This module will shed the light on the ecosystem that can unleash women's full potential in economy. It will investigate the glass ceiling barriers that are at play, and determine the measures that could break the barriers, particularly cultural norms and traditions.

### **Objectives**

At the end of the module, participants were able to

- Identify the critical factors that undermine effective participation of women in economic sector;
- Comprehend the gains of women participation in the economy;

- Broaden their knowledge on ways to improve economic participation of women; and
- Capture lessons-learned from Thailand to transfer back to their home countries.

### **Scope**

- Elimination of legal and traditional barriers for women's control over assets and access to opportunities and resources
- Facilitating women in informal economy to gain access to markets and trade
- Closing digital gender divide through skill development training and STEM/ ICT education
- Women at work place: Elimination of occupational segregations and decent work promotion

### **Module 4. Gender Mainstreaming**

This module will focus on mainstreaming gender dimension in developing policies, strategies, regulations and services as a mean to achieve gender equality. It would expose participants to the different needs and risks between men and women in society, and how they could be address through gender-sensitive planning. Lessons-learned would be drawn from the countries that are adopting gender-sensitive budget. Using the key tools and indicators, it would display how gender-responsive fiscal policies and public expenditure would optimize its efficiency and effectiveness to achieve the desired outcomes.

### **Objectives**

At the end of the module, participants were able to

- increase knowledge on tools and indicators for gender mainstreaming;
- deepen understanding the process of gender-responsive budgeting and audit; and
- improve their ability to conduct gender impact assessment.

### **Scope**

- Concepts and tools of gender mainstreaming
- Gender budgeting and gender audit
- Gender Impact Assessment

### **Module 5: Gender-sensitive Social Protection System**

It is evident that social protection systems adopted in many countries are not cost-efficient and effective since they failed to look through gender lens in the first place. The module will familiarize participants with different categories of social protection measures. Then, it will underpin designing reproductive health services, social-physiological support services, social benefit schemes that could facilitate the working mothers, and safeguard the vulnerable women groups including the victims of domestic violence and trafficking. It will discuss the good operation mechanisms to respond to the targeted groups in crisis conditions including COVID-19.

## **Objectives**

At the end of the module, participants were able to

- articulate the necessity of gender-sensitive social protection system;
- improve knowledge on different components of social protection system; and
- develop their capacity to use tools in developing gender-sensitive social protection system.

## **Scope**

- Different types of social protection schemes
- Need-based (Gender-friendly) social services and protection measures
- Social Services for vulnerable women/girl Groups
- Decent work promotion for women at work places

## **Module 6: Gender-responsive Stakeholder Engagement and Gender Advocacy**

In this module, the participants will design action plans which would advocate women empowerment or narrowing gender gaps in specific areas they are working on. It would facilitate the participants to discuss the roles of men, private sector and media to shift stereotypes and social barriers. The trainer will mentor to develop action plans using the concepts and tools acquired in the entire training.

## **Objectives**

At the end of the module, participants were able to

- Promote the role of men in achieving gender quality;
- Engage media more effectively to influence public opinion on gender equality; and
- Develop action plans with stakeholder analysis and stakeholder engagement.

## **Scope**

- Stakeholder Analysis and engagements
- Role of men in gender equality
- Media and gender equality
- Action plans

## **Advanced Assignment:**

**Country Report:** This report is to present country situation on gender equality and women empowerment policies and practices.

As the key points, the participants should prepare the following key points from the country report to present and discuss in the respective modules interactively.

- Ratification of CEADAW and other international and regional agreement related to women rights
- Women representation in politics
- Women representation in economy
- Women access to education and health care

- Policies, legal framework, committee or unit dealing with women empowerment and women right protection
- Cooperation with international organization and other relevant stakeholders to promote gender equality and women empowerment programs
- Issues and Challenges

### **Participants Criteria:**

Participants should:

- Be middle to senior government officials (for representative from government), Research institutes or middle management official from private sector.
- Have their direct working roles in women empowerment and protection programs
- Have a relevant university degree, or equivalent educational background;
- At least five years of working experience;
- Be able to communicate professionally in written and spoken English.

### **Expected Results**

- Develop action plans that contribute to enhancing gender equality, women empowerment or women right protection in each country; and
- Emerge an international network in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

### **Evaluation**

- Pre-test and post-test of knowledge improvement
- After-event evaluation for effectiveness of the training (anonymous)
- Post training evaluation after 3 months of the training completion (knowledge applicability and usefulness)

### **Implementing Staff:**

- Ms. Than Tha Aung (Program Coordinator)  
Sustainable Energy and Environment Department  
Mekong Institute  
Mobile: +66 (0) 637 83 237  
Email: thantha@mekonginstitute.org
- Ms. Yupaporn Siribut (Program Officer )  
Sustainable Energy and Environment Department  
Mekong Institute  
Mobile: +66 (0) 81 402 6799  
Email: yupaporn@mekonginstitute.org