



# PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT JUSTICE REPORT

THAILAND

FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN

Foundation for Women (Thailand)  
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

**PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT JUSTICE REPORT**  
**MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE SUSTAINABLE**  
**DEVELOPMENT GOAL IMPLEMENTATION &**  
**DEVELOPMENT JUSTICE FOR INDIGENOUS WOMEN**

By  
FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN  
Thailand

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## ACRONYMS

<b>APWLD</b>	<b>Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development</b>
<b>BAAC</b>	<b>Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Co-operatives</b>
<b>DWAFFD</b>	<b>Department of Women’s Affair and Family Development</b>
<b>FFW</b>	<b>Foundation for Women</b>
<b>IWNT</b>	<b>Indigenous Women’s Network of Thailand</b>
<b>MDG+</b>	<b>Millennium Development Goals Plus</b>
<b>MICT</b>	<b>Ministry of Information and Communications Technology</b>
<b>MPBM</b>	<b>Master Plan on Biodiversity Management</b>
<b>MSDHS</b>	<b>Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</b>
<b>NCPO</b>	<b>National Council for Peace and Order</b>
<b>NCSD</b>	<b>National Committee on Sustainable Development</b>
<b>NDS</b>	<b>National Development Strategies</b>
<b>NESDB</b>	<b>Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board</b>
<b>NGO-COD</b>	<b>NGOs Coordinating Committee on Development</b>
<b>NSO</b>	<b>National Statistical Office of Thailand</b>
<b>SDGs</b>	<b>Sustainable Development Goals</b>
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Sufficiency Economy Philosophy</b>
<b>VNR</b>	<b>Voluntary National Review</b>
<b>WDP</b>	<b>Women’s Development Plan</b>
<b>WNPP</b>	<b>Women’s Network for Advancement and Peace</b>

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The indigenous peoples or persons belong to ethnic minorities that have long inhabited the country since time immemorial. And yet many of them still lack citizenship causing different forms of exclusion in development programmes and policies, including non-access to government services. This report gathered critical concerns, recommendations and related information from representatives of IWNT and women's networks in Thailand. The main areas of their concerns are on **SDG 1, 2 and 5**.

**On Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere. Indigenous peoples are excluded in government policy to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. Indigenous peoples including women and girls are mostly undocumented thus would hardly benefit from the social welfare schemes carried out nationwide to alleviate

poverty. More and more indigenous women are migrating within and outside of Thailand to look for jobs and are at risk of being trafficked or exploited in other countries. Indigenous peoples are impacted negatively from the NCPO Order to restore national forest land. The impacts on indigenous women and girls are more severe being the ones involved in actual cultivation, management and



sustainability of forests. Due to lack of means for economic livelihood, some indigenous peoples also engaged in drug trafficking. Since the past decade, there have been a higher proportion of indigenous women inmates charged with drug-related offenses.

**For Goal 2:** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, the Thai government has introduced an agricultural policy to increase areas and productivity of organic farmlands, promote domestic consumption and encourage international certification of Thai organic produce.



However, indigenous communities are not specifically included as targets of such policy. Thus many of them are forced to go into contract farming and comply with certain conditions and requirements that creates reliance to agro-chemical inputs such as seeds, insecticide, herbicides, and fertilizers from corporations. This imposed type of production endangers the preservation of genetic diversity of seeds and inevitably led to food insecurity, however ensures huge profits for agro-chemical companies. Realizing such impacts, indigenous women are now revitalizing their active role in collecting and maintaining local seeds for their own farms. The increase in agricultural productivity, incomes of small-scale food production, maintenance of genetic diversity of seeds, and cultivated plants as targeted in SDG 2 are more likely end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. As an additional indicator, the research proposes to measure the ability of the indigenous communities, particularly women in maintaining the genetic diversity of seeds and plants.

With respect to **Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, indigenous communities are still excluded from government protection mechanisms and measures. Most indigenous women do not report violent crimes to the police which is attributed to the lack of knowledge on their rights and procedures,



and as well as for fear of retaliation from the perpetrators. Our research finds that domestic violence remains rampant in some communities, resulting in some of the women committing suicide. Indigenous women's groups revealed that women and girl children in remote areas depend on local leaders when faced with sexual violence and abuse. In cases where the perpetrators are those in power or with certain influence, the victims may not be able to gain access to any protection and redress. Some girls are subjected to early marriage due to cultural norms, hence depriving them of educational opportunity. Traditional



harmful practices such as wife kidnapping still prevail in some indigenous groups. It is essential that indicators capture how the abovementioned violence against indigenous women are properly addressed.

A major gap and equally a challenge is the failure of the Department of Women's Affair and Family Development (DWAFD) to carry out and coordinate gender mainstreaming efforts across all government agencies. DWAFD has not applied CEDAW framework in implementing SDG. Hence, government agencies do not have adequate knowledge and analytical skills to introduce and mainstream gender responsive policies and programmes in order for women, in particular, indigenous women to get the most benefit from such policies and programmes. Particular concerns towards improving the lives of indigenous women, freeing them from poverty and hunger, ensuring their food security and agricultural sustainability, and enabling them to enjoy gender equality are encompassed in the recommendations of this research.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Over the past five decades, Thailand has made remarkable progress in economic development, elevating Thailand from a low-income country to a middle-income country. The country's latest Human Development Index Rank for 2015 which was 87 out of 188 UN member states shows a comprehensive favorable picture of human development in longevity, education, and income.

There has been a change in the country's nature of production structure from agriculture to an export-led growth industry. Foreign direct investment in basic industries such as automobile, electronics component and electric appliances has been one of the major sources of national income. Per capita income has been increasing due to higher employment rate while the number of the poor and population under the poverty line have been decreasing within the past seven years. Nonetheless, income disparity still exists.

The country's production from service and agricultural sectors has been gradually decreasing.

### KEY STATISTICS ON THAILAND



**UNDP Human Development  
Index Rank**  
87

**UNDP Gender Inequality Rank**  
79

**Palma Ratio 2010-2015  
(Income Inequality)**  
1.8

**THAILAND'S HEALTH BUDGET USD 28 BILLION vs  
MILITARY BUDGET USD 6.8 BILLION**

**THAILAND'S MINIMUM WAGE IS USD 2,219  
(PER ANNUM) VS RICHEST INDIVIDUAL NET  
WORTH USD 15.8 BILLION**

Thailand has been steadily at risk of losing its competitiveness in labor costs in the industrial sector despite the increased number of domestic investors using complex technology. This is perpetuated by several factors; in particular, research and development, quality of infrastructure, and rules and regulations that are rather weak and have become obstacles to economic restructuring. Although the gap in education between women and men is decreasing (See Table 1) the gap between urban and rural areas still remains. The quality of education, child intelligence, risky eating behaviors, hazardous environment, and low labor productivity have all remained major concerns. Though various types of social protection and social welfare have been extended to a great number of people, many marginalized groups still lack access to social services. Income inequality and inadequate access to resources such as land and credit are continuing challenges. Drug use is prevalent, particularly among young and adolescent groups. Gender discrimination persists in both the private and public domains.

After the “democratic revolution” in 1932 which transitioned Thailand from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy, coups have occurred sporadically. Since the most recent coup d’état of 22 May 2014, Thailand has been under the rule of a military organization which has taken control of the national administration. A Road Map was collectively developed by the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) and the government to deal with national reconciliation, interim constitution, and general election. To date, Thailand has just passed its 20th constitution. The long-term National Development Strategies (NDS), 2017-2036, required by the constitution was formulated as the guiding framework to cope with rapid socio-economic change, globalization, regional and international economic cooperation and national political conflict with a vision towards national security, prosperity, and sustainability.

Despite remarkable progress in economic development, evaluation from various sources indicated that national social and economic developments in the past thirty years have failed to distribute resources, wealth, and opportunities to the people equally and make economies work for the people. The progress made comes at the expense of the country’s natural resources and environment, and violate human rights and community rights; reinforces all forms of discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion. The people are not able to make informed decisions about their own lives, communities, and future. Key systemic and structural barriers towards achieving development justice are rooted in patriarchal ideology, neo-liberal globalization, and militarism.

As elsewhere, the social system in Thailand is historically and presently characterized by unequal power relations between women and men whereby women are systematically discriminated. This usually starts from the socialization of gender roles within the family and is strengthened through different levels of education, discriminatory laws and policies, and media that reinforces gender stereotypes and patriarchal culture. Patriarchy exists in almost every sphere of life in social, legal, political, economic and religious both explicitly and implicitly.

**Table 1: Thailand Ranking in the Human Development Index and Gender Inequality Index, Human Development Report, 2014-2016**

Year of HD Report	HDI Rank	Gender Inequality Index Rank	Maternal mortality ratio (deaths per 100,000 live births)	Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15–19)	Share of seats in parliament (% held by women)	Population with at least some secondary education (% ages 25 and older)		Labour force participation rate (% ages 15 and older)	
						Female	Male	Female	Male
2016	87	79	20	44.6	6.1*	40.9	45.8	62.9	80.2
2015	93	76	26	41.0	6.1*	35.7	40.8	64.3	80.7
2014	89	70	48	41.0	15.7	35.7	40.8	64.4	80.8

**Note:** \* Refers to the percentage of women in the General Assembly appointed by the National Council for Peace and Order whereas the normal percentage in the previous years was around 15.

**Source:** Human Development Report, 2016, United Nations Development Programme.

Gender-based violence is a key feature of patriarchy. In 2013, about 90 per cent of aggrieved persons from domestic violence, mainly physical violence, were women.<sup>1</sup> About 10 women were reportedly raped every day.<sup>2</sup> A recent research report indicated that 87 percent of rape cases do not get reported to the police.<sup>3</sup> Though Thailand has made progress in enacting and amending a number of laws, including domestic violence law in 2007 and gender equality law in 2015, women's human rights are not well recognized and grounds of discrimination are still allowed if the act is done under the reasons of religious principles and national security. The inequality, thus, still perpetuates. Statistics from **Table 1** above indicates positive changes in Thai society as seen from a decreasing

1 See [www.violence.in.th](http://www.violence.in.th), Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development.

2 See [https://www.m-society.go.th/ewt\\_news.php?nid=11393](https://www.m-society.go.th/ewt_news.php?nid=11393), Royal Thai Police Bureau

3 See <http://www.krobkruakao.com/%E0%B8%82%E0%B9%88%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%A7%E0%B8%94%E0%B9%88%E0%B8%A7%E0%B8%99/7695/%E0%B9%84%E0%B8%97%E0%B8%A2%E0%B8%95%E0%B8%B4%E0%B8%94%E0%B8%AD%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%99%E0%B8%94%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%9A10%E0%B8%82%E0%B8%AD%E0%B8%87%E0%B9%82%E0%B8%A5%E0%B8%81%E0%B8%84%E0%B8%94%E0%B8%B5%E0%B8%82%E0%B9%88%E0%B8%A1%E0%B8%82%E0%B8%B7%E0%B8%99.htm>, TV 3 Channel

ratio of maternal mortality, and an increasing percentage of women ages 25 and older with at least some secondary education. However, some unfavorable changes can also be found from an increasing adolescent birth rate in women ages 15-19, a decreasing percentage of seats in parliament held by women and a decreasing percentage of women ages 15 and older who are in the labour force. Such negative changes resulted in Thailand's Gender Inequality Index Ranking dropping from 70 to 79 within three years.

### Box 2: Gender Gap in Thailand

<i>Global Gender Gap Report 2016, World Economic Forum</i>	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
<i>Thailand Gender Gap Rank</i>	71	60	61	65	65	60	57	59

The increase in adolescent pregnancy sees teenagers face the heavy burden of premature pregnancy, being stigmatized by the society and face increased risk of *dropping out of their education*. Trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labor also persists. Women's voices are not adequately heard and they are highly under-represented in national and local politics both in the public and the private sectors and in the judiciary. In 2014, the proportion of women in the parliament is only 15.7 per cent and after the latest Coup the percentage plunged to 6.1 while the election of local administrations at all levels were frozen under the interim constitution. Statistics from **Box 2** also confirms that Thailand's gender gap during the last decade is gradually widening as shown in the drop in Thailand's rank from 59 in 2009 to 71 in 2016.<sup>4</sup>

As for indigenous women, they are roughly estimated to comprise around 50 percent of the total indigenous population. The rough figure can only be approximated due to their exclusion from citizenship.<sup>5</sup> The traditional belief and practices of the indigenous peoples strongly represent the patriarchal culture.

Men always earn more respect and value than women. They are the ones

4 The gender gap ranking is based on 4 overall areas of inequality between women and men in 130 economies around the world, over 93 per cent of the world's population: 1) economics participation and opportunity, 2) educational attainment, 3) political empowerment, 4) health and survival.

5 NGO CEDAW Shadow Report on Behalf of Indigenous Women in Thailand for the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of CEDAW, July 2017, pg. 4, submitted by the Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand (IWNT) and the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), Thailand. -The number of indigenous peoples in Thailand are roughly estimated to 1 million peoples while women is around 500,000 peoples. The indigenous peoples comprises mainly across three geographical regions; the Chao Ley fisher communities in the south, small groups in the north-east and east of Thailand and the highland peoples, or hill tribes as they are referred, in the north and north-west.

granted the roles of community leaders and are the ones performing community ceremonies. According to case studies from Lisu, Karen, Kachin and other tribes, the “Lisu belief system always refers to male gods, while the cultural leaders and ceremony conductors are always men. Women are placed at home as the helpers in arranging things for the ceremonies in the families.” Their spaces in the family and communities depend mainly on the kinship system of male domination. A woman from Hmong ethnic group expressed that “spaces for widows never exists in the families of origin. They can help in doing farming for the family of origin but they cannot dwell in the same house. Thus, making many of them easily sexually violated by any men in the communities.” A woman from Tai Yai tribe revealed that “...Tai Yai culture rejects women from 3 powers: decision-making power, negotiation and refusal power, and thinking power.”<sup>6</sup> Indigenous women are also affected by the negative sex roles and gender stereotypes, stemming from both within their communities and mainstream Thai society.

As a result, among others, indigenous women are the most marginalized group in our society. Being the minority groups they are usually marginalized based on race, class or economic status, ethnicity, etc. in the society through laws, policies, programs, and practices. And being women from the minority groups they also face multiple oppression from their male counterparts or other members of the communities. Indigenous women do not benefit equally from government policies and programs that are not sensitive and responded to the situation of indigenous women and girls.

Lower status of women and limited space at home or their communities are hindering factors in adjusting to Thai culture and likelihood of getting citizenship. Therefore, indigenous women are deprived of appropriate access to education, health care services or access to livelihoods.

Neo-liberal economic globalization has enabled the proliferation of free trade agreements, with Thailand negotiating and signing 22 trade agreements so far. The resulting reduction of import tariffs to 0 percent for vegetables, fruits, grains and the on-going reduction of tariffs on dairy products, estimated to reach 0% by 2025, have dramatically affected Thai farmers, including millions of indigenous peoples who grow fruits in the north.<sup>7</sup> The land available for agriculture use has decreased by one-third as the local farmers are unable to compete with cheaper imported agricultural goods. This has created food dependency from outside the country thereby threatening extensively the national food security. The

6 A separate CEDAW Report on Ethnic Minority Women prepared by the Indigenous Women’s Network of Thailand and the Centre for Multiculturalism and Education Policy, Faculty of Education, Chiang Mai University, submitted to CEDAW Committee in 2012

7 Biothai Foundation, <http://www.biothai.net/node/30491>, 6 June 2016



on-going trade negotiations, such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), will exacerbate this, and also affect other sectors such as health and medicine.<sup>8</sup>

Following repeated coups, the civilian governments' administration is usually influenced by the military. This results from inadequate democratic ideology, capacity and corrupt behavior of most of the politicians, and low level of political scrutiny from a general public that brings in the military to solve economic and political instability. However, militarism has failed to provide the people with opportunities to fully participate in the democratic and governance process. The military expenditure has been increasing from USD 3,517 million in 1988 to approximately USD 6,100 million in 2017<sup>9</sup>, which is almost the same amount as the budget allocated for human resources development nationwide for 2017 alone (8 percent of the total budget), according to the national strategy for SDG implementation to ensure better quality of lives of individuals and societies in various aspects.

## 2. NATIONAL CONTEXT AS IT PERTAINS TO THE 2030 AGENDA

Thailand has been moving towards sustainable development since the United Nations set the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 as the global targets to improve the living quality of the people in 2015 by addressing hunger, poverty and inequality, illiteracy, sickness and environmental degradation through international cooperation. It was the period during which the 9th Five-year National Economic and Social Development Plan, 2002-2006, was implemented with the aim of achieving "Sustainable Development and the Well-being of All Thais through inclusive and holistic approaches based on the preservation of national resources, national wisdom, and culture". Thailand had achieved several important MDGs goals and targets prior to the 2015 timeframe, including eradication of poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, and health. These early achievements have allowed Thailand to pursue the more ambitious and challenging Millennium Development Goals Plus (MDG+) with prospects for achievement in several areas. The Universal Health Care Scheme (UHCS) which ensures equitable entitlement to health care for all Thais, equal access to education for girls and boys, development cooperation extended to the neighbouring countries and other regions have been integral to Thailand's advances in attaining the MDGs.

In 2015, a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Goals and targets, known as the Sustainable Development Goals

8 Biothai Foundation, <http://www.biothai.net/node/30519>, 22 March 2017

9 SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, <https://sipri.org/databases/milex>

(SDGs) was adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit.<sup>10</sup> Thailand, thus, set forth sustainable development as her national agenda and moving towards security, prosperity, and sustainability without anyone left behind. The Constitution of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017) required the government to formulate the 20-Year National Strategies (2017-2036) as national goals towards achieving sustainable development based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) which was firstly introduced by His Majesty late King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 1975. SEP encourages all Thais to conduct themselves with knowledge, rationale, and moral which would sustain sufficiency and balanced results. The 12th five-year National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021) that was mapped out in line with the long-term national strategy also had specific reference to the SDGs. Concurrently, the government also set forth the National Reform Agenda to improve the national income and achieve sustainable development.

Thailand's inclusive and holistic approaches, her firm commitment to achieving a wide range of SDGs and targets by 2030, the new Constitution, along with the long-term strategy and medium-term plan to the national reform agenda have opened more opportunities for women's organizations to connect marginalized group of women to the mainstream CSOs networks to work together to integrate women's urgent needs into CSOs' proposals to the Government. Through such linkage, the mainstream CSOs will also be able to understand and integrate gender and development justice perspective in various sectors of national social and economic development. More importantly, Thailand's SDGs commitment significantly provides more opportunities for CSOs to review and monitor SDGs planning and implementation of various government agencies.

### 3. PRIORITY ISSUES

This report focuses on indigenous women in the Northern provinces of Thailand, their socio-economic status, and specific SDGs and targets related to indigenous women that Thailand needs to achieve by 2030 gearing towards gender equality and development justice. They comprises 9 groups: 1) Karen, 2) Kachins, 3) Dara-ang, 4) Thai-Yai, 5) Mien, 6) Hmong, 7) Lua, 8) Lahu 9) Lisu, and 10) Akkha. The government use the term "ethnic" to represent the indigenous peoples or highlanders and other minorities living in different part of the country other than Thai. According to the Cabinet resolution on 29 August 2000 the indigenous peoples was classified into 3 categories: 1) those who was born in Thailand in between 10 April 1910 - 13 December 1972 who are entitled to

the citizenship; 2) those who immigrate to Thailand before 3 October 1985 who are entitle to permanently live in Thailand with migrant status; and 3) those who illegally immigrate to Thailand after 3 October 1985 with illegal migrant status.


In order to identify the priority SDGs and targets, a Consultation Workshop for 30 core members of the indigenous women's Network Thailand was held from 8-9 February 2017 in Chiangmai.<sup>11</sup> The workshop started with sharing of women's situation of each tribe to come up with common issues and followed by an introduction of CEDAW and SDGs as national obligation and commitment. An overview of SDGs, its targets and indicators were also introduced. The participants were facilitated to discuss the common issues and expected changes. Their major concerns include the impact of government policies on land allocation and restoration of national forest and non-inclusive policy on organic farming that pushes them into illegal migration, trafficking for sexual exploitation, prostitution, forced labor, etc. Many of them experience domestic violence and do not have prompt protection, appropriate remedies, and access to legal assistance.

Drawn on the common issues discussed during the workshop, SDG 1, 2, and 5; including targets and indicators relevant to the situation were selected as their priority goals. Goal 1 is End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, and Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. They are the areas that indigenous peoples in general and women, in particular, are marginalized and their rights are violated in spite of their significant roles in their families and the continuation and sustenance of society.

During the workshop, it was found that the current indicators globally agreed by the UN member states to measure whether the poor have access to land which is Indicator 1.4.1 on the proportion of the population living in households with access to basic services, or Indicator 1.4.2 on the number of adult with secure tenure rights to land with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure, cannot give the answer. The development justice indicator developed by APWLD on "Percentage of agricultural land accessed by smallholders classified by sex and ethnicity" is more appropriate **(See Box 3)**.


<sup>11</sup> The workshop on Tribal Women and Monitoring of State Implementation under SDGs, organised by the Foundation for Women and the Inter Mountain Peoples' Education and Culture in Thailand Association, (IMPECT) from 8-9 February 2017

### Box 3: Goal 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere

<b>Target 1.4</b> 	<i>By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular, the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance</i>
<b>Indicator 1.4.1</b>	<i>Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services</i>
<b>Indicator 1.4.2</b>	<i>Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure</i>
<b>Development Justice Indicator</b>	<i>Percentage of agricultural land accessed by smallholders</i>


As an additional indicator, the workshop proposes to also measure the ability of the tribal communities, particularly women in maintaining the genetic diversity of seeds and plants, apart from the average income of small-scale food producers and number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium or long-term conservation facilities (**See Box 4**).

### Box 4: Goal 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

<b>Target 2.3</b> 	<i>By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers</i>
<b>Indicator 2.3.2</b>	<i>Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and ethnicity</i>
<b>Target 2.5</b>	<i>By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed</i>
<b>Indicator 2.5.1</b>	<i>Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium or long-term conservation facilities</i>
<b>National Indicator</b>	<i>Number of the genetic diversity of seeds and plants that are maintained by location, indigenous communities, and women</i>

For monitoring the progress made towards gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, the workshop agreed with the development justice indicator to expand to include women of all ages and psychological violence for

domestic violence and expand to include women of all ages for sexual violence. As additional indicators, it is also equally essential to measure whether the aggrieved women and girls of all ages subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner and other persons were able to report the cases to the authority concerns and have access to appropriate social assistance and legal protection, including increase of government budget allocated for shelters and social protection to indigenous women and girls. **(See Box 5)**

<b>Box5: Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</b>	
<b>Target 5.2</b> 	<i>Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation</i>
<b>Indicator 5.2.1</b>	<i>Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age</i>
<b>Development Justice Indicator</b>	<p><u><i>Expand to include women of all ages and include psychological violence:</i></u></p> <p><i>Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls subjected to physical, psychological and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the last 12 months by forms of violence.</i></p> <p><i>[Data for this indicator should be disaggregated by age, income, location, marital status, disability, education level, and ethnicity.]</i></p>
<b>Indicator 5.2.2</b>	<i>Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence</i>
<b>Development Justice Indicator</b>	<p><u><i>Expand to include women of all ages</i></u></p> <p><i>Proportion of women and girls subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, by age and place of occurrence.</i></p> <p><i>[Data for this indicator should also be disaggregated by age, income, location, marital status, disability and education level.]</i></p>
<b>National Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Number of women who were able to report their GVB cases to the authority concerned Data for this indicator should be disaggregated by age, marital status, education, income, disability, location, and ethnicity</i></li> <li>• <i>Number of women and girls affected by violence in the family and communities who were able to have access to appropriate social assistance and legal protection</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Data for this indicator should be disaggregated by age, marital status, education, income, disability, location, and ethnicity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increased of government budget allocated for shelters and social protection to indigenous women and girls</i></li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 2: BRIEF ASSESSMENTS ON THE COUNTRY'S SDGS COMMITMENTS

This chapter will review mechanisms and architectures set up by the government for the SDGs implementation and assess how much these mechanisms engage CSOs in the process, especially from women's organizations.

### EXISTING ARCHITECTURE OF SDGS IMPLEMENTATION

In 2015, Thailand's SDGs institutional mechanisms were established, starting from the National Committee on Sustainable Development (NCSD) chaired by the Prime Minister to formulate national policy and strategies for sustainable development; promote and support the implementation of public and private sector on sustainable development, keep track on the government implementation of SD strategies and other international agreements regarding SD, provide recommendations to the Cabinet on the use and improvement of economic, social and legal measures to support SD, set national direction and position on SD, and monitor and evaluate both public and private sector on SD implementation.

Three sub-committees were also set up to be responsible for implementing SDGs, enhancing understanding of and evaluating SD with the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy, and developing an information system to support SD. The Office of the National Economics and Social Development Board (NESDB) under the Office of the Prime Minister is the Secretariat of the National Committee. It is responsible for ensuring implementation, quality reporting, and effective mechanism and measures for SDG implementation. Each sub-committee is chaired by key ministry concerned and consisted of relevant government agencies as members. Additionally, three working groups were set up under the Sub-Committee for Implementing SDGS with mandates to ensure SDGs integration and prioritization, SDGs reporting, and economics, social and legal measures to promote SDGs implementation.

In 2016, the NCSD assigned the government agencies to prioritize targets of each SDG under their responsibility that need urgent action and required them to refer to the philosophy of Subsistence. Thirty SDGs targets of each goal were prioritized with road maps for implementation linking with 6 areas of the long-term national strategies—1) Security, 2) Competitiveness Capacity Building, 3) Potential Development, 4) Social Equality, 5) Environment-Friendly Quality of Life, and 6) Public Administration Development. Ministerial focal points were established to coordinate the ministries implementation, monitoring,





and reporting. A six-month progress report is required from key ministry and relevant government agency responsible for specific goals. In July 2017, Thailand will attend the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) to be held in New York under the theme “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world.” The purpose of the forum is to review in depth sustainable development goal 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.<sup>12</sup> Thailand, however, will submit a voluntary national review (VNR) report on the state of implementation of all SDGs in the country. Various SDGs forums were organized for different target groups, including academia, CSOs, and private sector to discuss the priority goals, road maps, the role of each actor and their opportunities for collaboration with the government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also organized a consultation in Bangkok on June 7th, 2016 with CSOs on the VNR, however, participants were limited to Bangkok-based organizations only.

Regarding information dissemination on SDGs, most government agencies provide online information on the SDGs relevant to their respective agencies including priority targets, indicators, a roadmap for different stages, but with no clear information on how the expertise of CSOs would be utilized in such implementation and what budget would be allocated.

Regarding the architecture for the implementation of Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, active collaboration between the Department of Women’s Affairs and Family Development (DWAFD) and the

<sup>12</sup> Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and forest innovation; Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; and Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

National Legislative Assembly (NLA) Standing Committee related to women and other disadvantaged groups led to a workshop in September 2016 to introduce SDG5, its targets and indicators to relevant government agencies. Two more workshops were subsequently held in April 2017 to identify indicators, availability of data, key responsible agencies including those responsible for data collection and to develop a Road Map for SDG5. Unfortunately, no CSOs were invited to participate in all three workshops.

## MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

With Thailand's commitment to integrate SDGs into the long-term national strategies and the medium-term national development, the budget for 2016 SDGs implementation is, thus, the national budget allocated for national economic and social development that was specified in the road map for achieving the SDGs of each ministry and department.

From 2016 to the present, the total national annual budget has steadily increased from USD 77.7 billion to USD 78 billion and USD 82.8 billion respectively<sup>13</sup>. It was reported by the Office of Budget and Finance that around 51 percent of the annual budget in 2017 is set to implement the programs and projects to strengthen national security, competitiveness capacity, human resources development, poverty eradication, water management and sustainable environment, and development of public sector management system while the other 49 percent is fixed expenses for administration such as salary, meeting fees, allowance, and public utilities.

So far, though there is strong commitment of the government agencies to involve CSOs in the implementation process, at the initial stage of SDGs implementation there is no clear picture on the budget to be directed to ensure the participation of CSOs, especially marginalized and non-Bangkok based CSO.

## THE ROLE OF CSOS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION

CSOs has been relatively recognized since the initial stage of the national implementation. In the national mechanism, particularly in the NCSD, the number of members representing CSOs is 4, and that of the private sector and public sector is 3 and 9 respectively. Whereas, the distribution of CSOs in the three Sub-Committees is rather limited as there is only one seat for CSO in each

sub-committee and those seats are for the same CSO. CSOs that are participating in the national mechanism are only those working on good governance for social development, environment, and sustainable development. The key networks of CSOs working on various issues for poor people and most marginalized groups are not included in the national mechanism.

Nevertheless, throughout 2016, several forums for different target groups with CSO involvement were organized. Around 5 consultations were organized to provide opportunities for specialists and CSOs to share their ideas and prioritize SDGs and its targets that could make an impact to a wider group of people, and identify Roadmaps for short-term, medium-term, and long-term national development. Another forum targeting CSOs for their profound experiences and flexibility in working with the grassroots people was organized to discuss the possible roles of CSOs to collaboratively work with the government to develop road maps for Thailand's implementation. Key CSO networks working on rural development, global warming and health participated, including the NGOs Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO-COD).

However, it was observed that the number of CSOs participated in each forum was limited. Many active CSOs working on specific issues of people affected by socio-economic development were not involved in such process. Of the CSOs working to promote women's rights, only the Foundation for Women (FFW) was invited and participated in such forum. There were no NGOs and groups of indigenous peoples who attended.

Currently, at least three ministries are playing active roles in taking off their road maps with the involvement of relevant CSOs e.g., FFW was invited by three ministries to participate in their SDGs implementation. Firstly, the Minister of Interior as the key ministry responsible for SDG 1 invited FFW to join the working group for Target 1.3 on social protection. Secondly, the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning of the Ministry of the National Resources and Environment invited FFW to involve in the implementation of SDG 13 on action for climate change, and thirdly, the Ministry of Public Health invited FFW to attend a consultative meeting on draft action plan and requested submission of written suggestion related to the plan.

However, from 2015 to May 2017, DWAFD as the national women's machinery of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS), as mentioned earlier, has never engaged CSOs in their SDG planning and implementation. A coalition of women's organizations was then formed to voice their special concerns to DWAFD. Communication between women's CSOs with DWAFD have been made and agreed to jointly organize, a constructive dialogue between DWAFD and the

coalition of women's network on Goal 5 in order to provide opportunities for more women CSOs to provide inputs to the road map of Goal 5. Around 30 women's CSOs were actively provide comments on road map of Goal 5 and expressed the necessity for DWAFD to work across other goals with relevant ministries some of which have their representatives to participate in the dialogue such as NSO, NESDB, MSDHS, and ministries of education, and labour. DWAFD welcomed CSOs' comments and offered a quota for 5 women's CSOs representatives to participate in the working group for improving the road map of Goal 5.

Additionally, in parallel to the government process, an initiative from CSOs actively working on environmental issues was made in conducting the CSOs Assembly to discussed SDG 13 on global warming. A representative of the IWNT was able to share their ideas on global warming issues.

## **BARRIERS TO ACCESSING RELEVANT INFORMATION**

Thailand's statistical system is decentralized. The National Statistical Office of Thailand (NSO) is the major source of key official statistics such as nationwide census and wide areas of periodic economic and social surveys while the other government agencies produce statistics for their own administrative purposes. Unavailability of sex-disaggregated data with inadequacy of classifications such as age groups, geographical areas, and ethnicity have long been the main data gap for implementing the national economic and social development, particularly to improve the socio-economic status of the marginalised groups.

With collaboration between NSO of the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (MICT)<sup>14</sup> and line ministries, the first set of Statistical Development Plans (2014-2015) covering 20 areas of national statistics including gender statistics was developed. Slow progress had been made due to inadequate understanding on the significance of gender statistics of the line ministries concerned. A lot effort have to be made among all concerned government agencies to ensure that the Statistical Development Plan will be actively translated into practice to ensure that this would lay the foundation for national official economic and social statistics, utilize them for policy formulation, and provide general public more access to official statistics.

<sup>14</sup> The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (MICT) was renamed to the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (MDES) in 2016



## CHAPTER 3: THEMATIC ANALYSIS: WOMEN'S PRIORITIES




This chapter will provide an analysis on progress and challenges in the implementation of the selected SDGs by relevant government agencies, particularly DWAFD as the national women's machinery.

Moreover, DWAFD have so far never carried out and coordinated gender mainstreaming efforts across all government agencies. Although there are Chief Gender Equality Officers and focal points at the ministerial and departmental levels, there has been no systematic and continual capacity development program conducted. Hence, the officers and focal points have inadequate knowledge and analytical skills to introduce gender responsive policies and programmes for women, particularly indigenous women to ensure that they benefit from such policies and programs.

With a provision of the 2017 Constitution that requires State to consider gender difference in budget allocation and Thailand's strong commitment to achieving the SDGs by 2030 in an integrated manner with the NESDP, there is an opportunity that has never existed before for the 12th Women's Development Plan (2017-2021) (WDP) to link to the 12th NESDP (2017-2021) through SDGs implementation. However, there is a need to follow up how DWAFD will link this to implementation.

## GOAL 1: TARGET 1.4

### Box 3: Goal 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere

<b>Target 1.4</b> 	<i>By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular, the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance</i>
<b>Indicator 1.4.1</b>	<i>Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services</i>
<b>Indicator 1.4.2</b>	<i>Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure</i>
<b>Development Justice Indicator</b>	<i>Percentage of agricultural land accessed by smallholders</i>

In 2014, the NCPO issued an order to restore national forest land, and suppress the invasion and destruction of forest resources. The aim was to increase the national forest land from 10 percent to 40 percent within 10 years as over 1 million hectares throughout the country were invaded and destroyed through illegal holding mainly by businesspersons, unlawful issuance of land licenses and expansion of agriculture lands by the peoples.

It was reported that this policy has desperately impacted on the peoples who dwell in the forest lands long before the government declaration of such forest lands as the government fail to exclude the community areas and the agricultural lands from the forest lands prior to its declaration. This made many of them suddenly become the invaders in the lands they are living on since childhood. The forest lands in the north are most severely invaded. The situation was getting worse when the field officers could not distinguish between the poor farmers and the employees of the influential persons. They took too rigid steps by immediately confiscating land from the indigenous peoples out of the land, cutting off the crops and displacing the indigenous communities.<sup>15</sup> The opposition from many of the indigenous peoples against such operations led to widespread disputes between the Indigenous communities and officers. Though the NCPO later issued in the same year a more flexible order to allow those who dwell in the forest land prior to 1998 to return to the forest lands where they belong, and subsequent policies in 2015 to allocate land holdings to poor villagers in 64 provinces and over 32, 000 hectares of lands to the villagers dwelling and farming in the forest lands in 2017. The rigid operations in many



areas still severely affect the feeling of the poor farmers, including the indigenous minority against the policy on restoration of forest land.

At present, the government has initiated social protection schemes to alleviate poverty of different groups of people nationwide during the economic recession as shown in the **Table 3** below. However, indigenous peoples in general and women in particular hardly benefit from such schemes as many of them do not have Thai citizenship. The remoteness of many of the indigenous communities is another obstacle in receiving such benefits.

**Table 3: Social Protection Schemes for Different Target Groups**

<i>Target</i>	<i>Type of Support</i>	<i>USD</i>	<i>THB</i>
<i>Each of 325,000 poor and homeless families*</i>	<i>One-time</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>2,000</i>
<i>People with disabilities*</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>800</i>
<i>A new-born baby of the family with annual income below THB 3, 000*</i>	<i>Monthly (3 years)</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>600</i>
<i>Elderly person*</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>at least 18-24</i>	<i>at least 600-800</i>
<i>Children/students in formal education from preschool to various fields of vocational education **</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>at least 51-360</i>	<i>at least 1,700- 11,900</i>
<i>Children/students in informal education from primary education to various fields of vocational education *</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>at least 33-128</i>	<i>at least 1,100-4246</i>

Source: \* Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2016

\*\* Ministry of Education, 2017

IWNT members who participated in the consultation workshop disclosed that due to the forest restorative measure, many heads of households have been arrested and charged for crimes by the authorities. Entire families was denied right to continue to live or do any further farming on the lands that they have been living on for over 80 years. Some households' crops were also destroyed by the authorities.

The government measure to protect forest land was introduced without considering that the indigenous peoples have been traditionally engaged in upland farming long before the proclamation of their lands as national forest areas. This restriction of their access to their land means no food, no income, and no future for their families and entire communities. These measures also affects men and women differently based on their status in the family and in the

communities that is shaped by patriarchal culture. More and more indigenous women are migrating within and outside of Thailand to look for jobs. Those who do not have identity cards and have no means of earning inevitably migrate to the cities for the future of their families. Indigenous women and young girls are targeted by recruiters to prostitution and forced labor in Malaysia, Singapore, and Japan. Unfortunately, there are no statistics on the situation of indigenous women and girls who are trafficked for sexual exploitation or sex trade.

The lack of access to education, health care services and access to livelihoods are other factors that increases the vulnerability of indigenous women and girls to trafficking and other forms of exploitation. A Lisu leader told the story of a 16-year old girl who was trafficked to Malaysia for forced labour in 2016 and was arrested by the Malaysian authorities as an illegal migrant instead of being rescued as an aggrieved victim of trafficking. She was finally able to return to Thailand through the assistance of an NGO in Malaysia, but continues to bear the trauma of the experience.

The lack of appropriate means of economic livelihood forces indigenous peoples to engage in drug trafficking. The past decade has seen a higher proportion of women inmates charged with drug-related offenses. A member of the Women's Development Network from Chiangrai province shared that almost 90 percent out of 919 female inmates in Chiangrai are facing drug related charges while one-fourth of them are indigenous women. In Terng district, out of 103 female inmates facing drug-related charges, 60 of them are indigenous women.

Indigenous women are left out of government development programs due to the neglect and inefficiency of the National Women's Machinery namely the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (OWAFD) that failed to carry out its gender mainstreaming efforts and coordination across all sectors. Therefore gender perspectives have not been considered in programming and in implementing development projects. There is also no existing government agency that focuses on the needs and rights of ethnic or indigenous peoples.

The table below shows that provinces in the north which have a high concentration of indigenous communities are becoming the low to least ranking of average monthly income, reflecting the vulnerability of indigenous peoples, particularly indigenous women.


**Table 4: Ranking of Average monthly income per household by selected years and provinces**

Province	2004	Least Ranking	2013	Least Ranking	2015	(Higher rank indicates lower average monthly income)
Chiang Rai	8,920	8	14393	5	13,497	1
Chiang Mai	12,586	41	13510	2	14,950	2
Mae Hong Son	8,676	5	8821	1	15,119	3
Payao	9643	16	15491	8	17673	9
Nan	10751	23	17598	19	17886	10
Phitsanulok	12751	42	27490	59	19235	16

Source: National Statistical Office, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology

From the above data and information, it can be concluded that the government policy and program do not incorporate the way of living of the indigenous peoples, women's concerns, and development impact on the whole family members.

## **GOAL 2 TARGET 2.3 AND 2.5**

<b>Box 4: Goal 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</b>	
<b>Target 2.3</b> 	<b>By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers</b>
<b>2.3.2</b>	<b>Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and ethnicity</b>
<b>Target 2.5</b>	<b>By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed</b>
<b>Indicator 2.5.1</b>	<b>Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium or long-term conservation facilities</b>
<b>National Indicator</b>	<b>Number of the genetic diversity of seeds and plants that are maintained by location, indigenous communities, and women</b>

The government has introduced an agricultural policy to increase areas and productivity of organic farmlands, promote domestic consumption and encourage international certification of Thai organic produce. Various programs


have been implemented to provide knowledge on organic farming, and extension, standard certification, processing, production network and organic market, organic fertilizer making. An Integrated Master Plan on Biodiversity Management (MPBM) 2015-2021 has been formulated in order to manage, conserve, and restore biodiversity; protect national benefit; and development of biodiversity knowledge and database. The policy and programs are generally designed for the people throughout the country.

It was reported that the primary targets of organic farming are those who already have practiced organic farming and ready to participate in improving their production standard. The coverage areas are nationwide. Indigenous communities are not specifically included as targets of such policy. Many of them are forced into contract farming and have to comply with certain conditions and requirements like the use of agrochemical inputs such as seeds, insecticide, and fertilizers of corporations. This endangers the preservation of genetic diversity of seeds and inevitably imperils food security.

The dependency of seeds and related agricultural products on the national and multi-national company can be seen through policies and programs for several decades. A recent memorandum of understanding between the Department of Agricultural Extension, Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Co-operatives (BAAC) and the leading national and multi-national companies selling animal food and seeds will not only create such dependency but also further cause the loss of ethnic people's sovereignty over local seeds and plants. The Bank for Agricultural and Co-operatives plays an active role as the outlet of the companies, selling seeds to the people. The MOU would convert two million paddy farms into corn farm for animal raising industry.<sup>16</sup> This would allow those companies to make a huge profit from seeds they are selling at the expense of national food security. Realizing the effect from the situation indigenous women are now revitalizing their active role in collecting and maintaining local seeds for their own farms.

The increase in agricultural productivity, incomes of small-scale food production, maintenance of genetic diversity of seeds, and cultivated plants targeted in SDG 2 are more certain contributing factors in ending hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

## Goal 5 Target 5.2

Box5: Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	
<b>Target 5.2</b> 	Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
<b>Indicator 5.2.1</b>	Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age
<b>Development Justice Indicator</b>	<p><u>Expand to include women of all ages and include psychological violence:</u></p> <p>Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls subjected to physical, psychological and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the last 12 months by forms of violence.</p> <p>[Data for this indicator should be disaggregated by age, income, location, marital status, disability, education level, and ethnicity.]</p>
<b>Indicator 5.2.2</b>	Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence
<b>Development Justice Indicator</b>	<p><u>Expand to include women of all ages</u></p> <p>Proportion of women and girls subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, by age and place of occurrence.</p> <p>[Data for this indicator should also be disaggregated by age, income, location, marital status, disability and education level.]</p>
<b>National Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of women who were able to report their GVB cases to the authority concerned Data for this indicator should be disaggregated by age, marital status, education, income, disability, location, and ethnicity</li> <li>• Number of women and girls affected by violence in the family and communities who were able to have access to appropriate social assistance and legal protection</li> </ul> <p>Data for this indicator should be disaggregated by age, marital status, education, income, disability, location, and ethnicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased of government budget allocated for shelters and social protection to indigenous women and girls</li> </ul>

There has been progress made by the government to address violence against women. The Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development (DWAFFD) has recently started to develop the National Plan to End Violence against Women which include all forms of violence. Protection mechanisms and measures have been introduced to assist aggrieved women and girls. However, women from

Hmong, Lisu and Pakeryor ethnic groups have brought up that indigenous communities are still excluded from these services and do not get access to legal assistance and protection. Most women do not report violent crimes to the police because of the lack of knowledge on their rights as well as fear of retaliation from the perpetrator. A leader of Tai Yai women concurred that affected women in indigenous communities will not go to government shelters due to the limited security provided by the shelters.

According to the Network of Hmong Women, many women in different provinces still suffer from domestic violence. After the opening of their hotline service at the end of 2015, there were 10 cases of Hmong women who committed suicide by ingesting herbicide. Only 7 of the women survived. While 4 women were able to get divorce with fair share of common property, 1 women were not able to do so and was shot dead by her husband. There are no special measures in place by the government agencies and local government concerned to provide adequate, appropriate and prompt support services and legal assistance to indigenous women affected by gender-based violence.

Since most indigenous communities are in remote areas, it is difficult for them to seek protection from existing mechanisms under the Domestic Violence Victims Protection Act. Indigenous women's groups revealed that women and girls in remote areas and those from indigenous communities depend on community leaders when faced with sexual violence and abuse. Indigenous women do not have transportation to come to town in order to report her case to the police while community leaders always suggest amicable settlement with the perpetrators. However, in cases where the perpetrators are those in power or with certain influence, the victims may not be able to gain access to any protection and redress.

Furthermore, it is found that some girl children are subjected to early marriage due to cultural norms, hence depriving them of educational opportunity. Traditional harmful practice such as wife kidnapping still prevails in some indigenous groups. Eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation is one of key target to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.



Although the data and information presented are primarily of indigenous women, women in remote areas throughout Thailand are also facing a similar situation and being left out from the development agenda. Thailand's commitment to the wide range of SDGs and targets presents an opportunity for women's organizations to work with other mainstream CSOs on SDGs to integrate women's urgent needs into CSOs' proposals to the Government and monitor the progress of implementation. Through such integration, other CSOs working in other sectors will also have increased their capacity on gender and development justice.

It is also worth emphasizing that "leaving no indigenous woman behind" in Thailand is "leaving no Thai behind" in the achievement of the SDGs particularly Goals 1, 2 and 5. "Leaving no indigenous woman behind" is also realizing development justice particularly redistributive justice and social and gender justice. Leading the path in reducing the inequalities between countries, between the rich and the poor and between women and men necessarily addresses structural barriers within systems of neoliberal globalization and militarism that perpetuate patriarchy which is the obstacle to gender justice.

Necessarily that the voice and space for indigenous women and other CSOs should be given importance and their development justice concerns addressed.

The following recommendations to the government are crucial to ensure changes:

1. Organize consultation workshops with different stakeholders working in indigenous communities to develop indicators for targets of Goal 1, 2, 5 and related goals; including a specific forum on SDG #5: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in order to provide opportunities for more women CSOs to be fully involved in the process
2. Support women's organizations and their networks to conduct workshops with mainstream CSOs and networks to provide information on SDGs and engage them in the review and monitoring process
3. Improve database and intensively carry out the compilation and presentation of data classified by sex, age, ethnicity and administrative area in a systematic manner and should be utilized to formulate policies and measure progress of SDGs implementation;
4. Formulate specific policy and plan on poverty to target indigenous communities;
5. Introduce special measures to allow the indigenous peoples to live, do

subsistence farming while at the same time constructively preserving national forest, including ecological tourism, and cease legal action on land dispute against farmers including indigenous peoples;

6. Support indigenous communities, especially women within them, to preserve plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture security;
7. Introduce special measures to provide assistance to indigenous women and girls aggrieved by violence in their family and communities.
8. Establish effective mechanism in receiving a complaint and provide protection to indigenous women including sensitization the indigenous community leaders on the rights to safety and security of women.





Foundation for Women (FFW) is a Bangkok-based women's organization, established in 1984 to provide services to the most disadvantaged women through the application of human rights principles. Focusing on rural women, young women, women workers, women, and children vulnerable to forced prostitution and international trafficking, victims of domestic and sexual violence, FFW aims to advance the participation of women and community, especially indigenous women in solving their issues and shaping development plans and policies that affect their lives. This research was carried out by FFW as part of an eight country project on Monitoring and Review of the SDGs with the Asia Pacific on Women, Law & Development (APWLD).



[www.apwld.org](http://www.apwld.org)

APWLD is the leading network of feminist organisations and individual advocates in Asia Pacific. Our 211 members represent groups of diverse women from 26 countries in Asia Pacific. Over the past 30 years, APWLD has actively worked towards advancing women's human rights and Development Justice.