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Youth Community Resilience to Climate Change in the Mekong Delta (Y-CoRe)

Assessing women's access to the socio-economic benefits of mangrove forest products from Cu Lao Dung, Soc Trang Province

Project background

Cu Lao Dung, a district located in the marine economic zone of Soc Trang Province, is blessed with fertile alluvium, a temperate climate, and significant geographical advantages, encompassing three ecological zones: freshwater, brackish water, and saltwater.

The aquatic resources of the mangrove forest are rich and abundant. Products include ripe mangrove apple, fish, clams, crabs, turtles, mudskippers, and more. Men typically catch fish and crabs, while women and children catch crab fingerlings, goby fish, clams. These aquatic resources generate significant income for households in coastal villages. In addition, the mangrove forests contribute to the development of eco-tourism and community-based tourism in the locality.

This region faces many challenges with gender equality. As in many rural areas in Viet Nam, men and women are assigned different roles within agricultural households. Improving women's access to the socio-economic benefits of mangrove forest products in Cu Lao Dung needs attention and research. Therefore, this study assessed women's access to the socio-economic contribution of mangrove forests in Cu Lao Dung, with the goal of finding ways to enhance their participation and opportunities.

Hoa, N. V. (2021). Assessing the economic value of mangrove forest products in the Mekong Delta (Doctoral thesis). Department of Agricultural Economics, School of Economics, Can Tho University.

Project objectives

Objective 1: Assessed the current socio-economic benefits of mangrove forest products in Cu Lao Dung District, Soc Trang Province.
Objective 2: Assessed women's access to these benefits.
Objective 3: Proposed solutions to improve women's access to these benefits.

Project overview

The project assessed the effectiveness in exploiting the socio-economic value of mangrove forest products in Cu Lao Dung District, Soc Trang Province. At the same time, the project also evaluated women's access to the socio-economic benefits brought by these products. Based on these findings, research was conducted to propose appropriate solutions to help women in the area have better access to the socio-economic benefits of mangrove forest.

Outstanding outcomes

Evaluating women's access to the socio-economic benefits of products from mangrove forest in Cu Lao Dung District, Soc Trang Province represents a new approach and holds significant potential for narrowing the gender gap and promoting gender equality in the research area.

The current socio-economic value of the mangrove forests in the locality is both diverse and substantial. Research results show that every year, the mangrove forests provide numerous resources for local people, including ripe mangrove apples, fish, clams, crabs, crabs, mudskippers, and more. Fishing activities are varied and adapted to different genders and age groups: men typically catch fish and crabs, while women and children catch crab fingerlings (baby crabs), goby fish, and clams. In addition, the research indicates that the mangrove forests contribute to the development of eco-tourism and community-based tourism in the locality.

Women in Cu Lao Dung District, Soc Trang Province are not sufficiently aware of the importance of assessing the socio-economic benefits of mangrove forest products. Currently, women are primarily responsible for household activities, including cooking, cleaning, and childcare. The burden of unpaid care work negatively affects women's employment opportunities and limits their access to training and education. In addition, the research highlighted a disproportionate effect on ethnic minorities, especially on the Khmer people, as Soc Trang is home to the largest Khmer population in Viet Nam. The research shows that the Khmer ethnic women have lower levels of accessibility compared to Kinh women, due to language and education barriers.

Therefore, the study proposes several important solutions, especially for women. These include government support to enhance their role and social status. In addition, local authorities should

implement policies that encourage and support women's access to the socio-economic benefits of mangrove forest products in Cu Lao Dung District, Soc Trang Province.

Team member's information

- Lu Pham Thien Duy, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Can Tho University
- Bui Quoc Khanh, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Can Tho University
- Lam Thi Diem Thuy, School of Economics, Can Tho University
- Trang Doan Nhu Huynh, School of Economics, Can Tho University