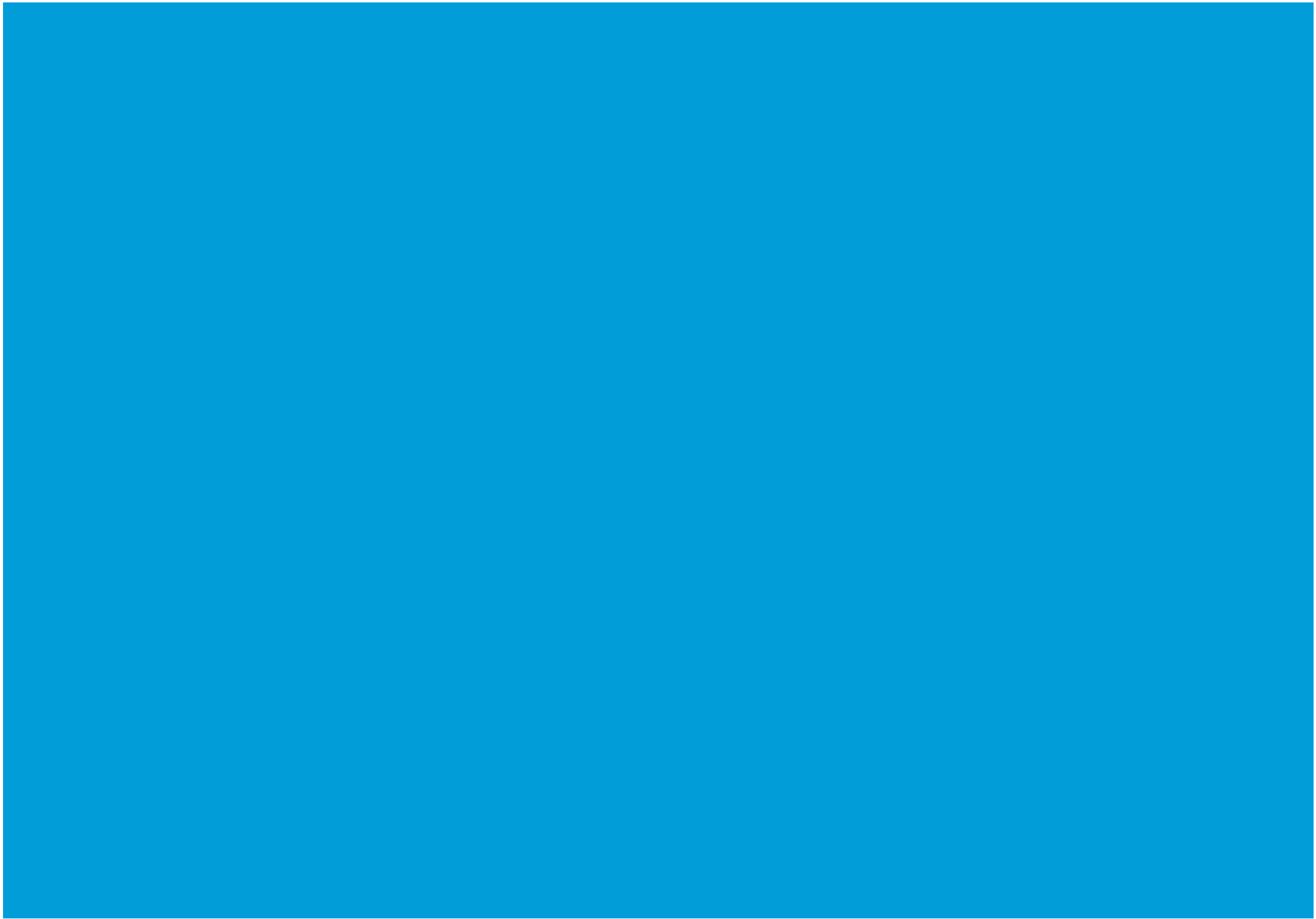




ADVANCING A MORE EQUAL AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

AN OVERVIEW OF THE
GRAISEA PROGRAM
2018–2023





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Across Southeast Asia, agriculture remains pivotal in shaping development and defining the quality of life of people who live in poverty. Yet, despite its immense economic significance, agriculture grapples with multifaceted hurdles, compelling a dire need for systemic reform, so no one is truly left behind. Picture an industry yielding billions while concurrently perpetuating widespread poverty among its core workforce — millions of women and men smallholder farmers. Addressing this profound paradox, hence, demands an approach far removed from the ordinary.

GRAISEA embarked on this transformative journey.



THE STATE OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asia is home to more than 660 million people,¹ many of whom rely on agriculture to deliver affordable and accessible food to the table. In recent decades, the region has seen remarkable developments in food security,² in part driven by improvements in agricultural productivity. For instance, in 2018, the region produced 220 million tons of rice, harvested over 48 million hectares of rice area — which equates to almost 30% of the world rice harvest.³ Trends in fisheries and aquaculture production also show a significant promise, as it increased by around 75% between 2000 and 2015. In fact, in 2015, the region accounted for 17% of global fisheries production.⁴

Together with an economic boom that has lifted millions of people out of poverty, the prospect for Southeast Asia is bright. Yet, its agriculture sector continues to succumb to challenges, diminishing its impact on poverty reduction and hunger. The situation is far worse in communities where smallholder farmers do not have access to resources and information, where women farmers' voices are not heard, and where small businesses and cooperatives are not supported.

For example, large private sector companies, whose entire business model relies on a healthy agriculture sector, often have not been 'inclusive' or 'responsible'. In the midst of this, economic and financial systems have not only excluded women from the benefits but also exploited smallholder agricultural producers and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), perpetuating inequalities in opportunities and outcomes.

These inequalities became more abundantly clear at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As early as 2020, for instance, the pandemic had been expected to cause a decline in agricultural farm labor, affecting more than 100

million people in Southeast Asia. This decline in labor has resulted in an estimated 3.11% reduction in aggregate volume of agricultural production in the region, equivalent to 29.58 million tons.⁵ When farmers are unable to work, food supply decreases and prices increase.

Unfortunately, this is just the tip of the iceberg. The agriculture sector in the region is also highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which is undermining its socioeconomic development and could force more and more people into extreme poverty in the next decades. Here, small-scale producers and MSMEs are particularly vulnerable, as they often have limited resources to adapt to changing weather patterns and are more likely to be affected by crop failures and price volatility. As a result, they are more likely to fall into poverty.

To illustrate, projections of economic losses by the Asian Development Bank paint a grim picture depicting a decline of up to 50% of rice yield by 2100. Between 2004 and 2014, ASEAN countries recorded a total economic loss of around USD 91 billion due to floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, and other natural hazards. Other effects of

climate change on the region include an increase of GHGs in the atmosphere, increasing water stress, and adverse impact on human health.

Clearly, the agriculture sector in Southeast Asia is under threat. To ensure it survives and thrives, innovative solutions that allow for different stakeholders to play significant roles are a must. These stakeholders include farmers, governments, businesses, and civil society organizations.

¹ ASEAN. 2023. *Investing in ASEAN 2023*.

² OECD and FAO. 2017. *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2017–2026. Special Focus: Southeast Asia*.

³ IRRI. 2020. *Transitioning toward equitable, profitable, and environmentally sound rice agri-food systems*.

⁴ OECD and FAO. 2017. *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2017–2026. Special Focus: Southeast Asia*.

⁵ Lifted from the GRAISEA Proposal.

Box 1. How Vietnamese smallholder farmers overcame a twofold crisis



Local and global threats

The Mekong Delta (MKD) of Vietnam, which is home to 19 million people or 21% of Vietnam's population, produces over 90% of the country's exported rice and more than 60% of the country's seafood.

In early 2020, communities in the MKD experienced the most severe drought and saline intrusion, even worse than the historic 2016 El Nino. As salinity reached 0.4% recorded 68 km from estuary, which exceeded production threshold of most rice varieties, some provinces were short on fresh water for domestic use, let alone farming.

While the local threat was looming, COVID-19 hit. The COVID-19 pandemic was an extraordinary and unprecedented crisis. Supply chains were disrupted, consumer demands plummeted, and businesses closed. Export was halted, and some enterprises stopped buying from small-scale producers or were unable to make timely payments. As a chain reaction, farmers were incapable of re-investing, and their livelihoods were threatened.

Preparedness is key

The 2015–2016 drought and saline intrusion were a painful lesson. To minimize the damage from climate change and extreme weather events, GRAISEA emphasized on building the resilience of participating smallholders. Following sustainable production practices and standards, farmers were trained to use less

production input for higher profits, as well as to improve their natural resources efficiency. Lessening the reliance on input improves farmers' resilience to climate change in the long term.

One of the key interventions of GRAISEA was conducting planning sessions on Vulnerability Risk Assessment, which not only improved farmers' awareness of the changing climate but also allowed them to develop risk scenarios and adaptation plans. Specifically, producers took the historic drought as a benchmark to pinpoint the potentially affected ponds and paddies, then adjusting their sowing and stocking. In 2020, shrimp farmers in Ca Mau stocked ponds with only 38% of post larvae compared to 2019. Production input was saved, risks were minimized, and damages were diminished.

Intensive shrimp farmers also converted some of their ponds to extensive farms temporarily. Although the net revenue was only 30% of a bumper intensive harvest, extensive ponds, which required much less investment, generated some income for them to live by should intensive ones fail.

Successful models like these where preventive measures are taken should be replicated in other regions and farming areas.

Read the full article [here](#).

OUR CHANGE PATHWAYS: WOMEN AND MEN SMALLHOLDER FARMERS AT THE HEART OF GRAISEA PROGRAMMING

The Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investments in Southeast Asia (GRAISEA) Program was aimed at transforming opportunities for small-scale women and men producers in the agriculture sector in Southeast Asia by acting as a catalyst for the emergence of inclusive markets and value chains and responsible business practices that respect and drive women's economic empowerment (WEE) and climate change resilience (CCR).

Working in Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Vietnam — and with complementing regional influencing work at the ASEAN — GRAISEA used a variety of partner models at multiple levels to tackle the root causes of poverty and to support system-wide change. In GRAISEA, we supported the development of agricultural value chains that provide opportunities for WEE, integrate human rights, and promote improved resilience to climate change.

We worked with farmers, producer groups, local companies, national governments, multi-national corporations, multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs), women's rights organizations (WROs), and with the regional economic block ASEAN. It supported the capacity development of producer organizations, promoted women's leadership and changes to social norms, brought about direct change to the practice of companies, and promoted national and regional policy change.

The program believed that sustainable change to address poverty and inequality can only be achieved by securing

the rights of women and men, and by transforming the practices, policies, and power relations that drive such injustices, through context-specific and multifaceted interventions with partners at multiple levels.

GRAISEA'S THEORY OF CHANGE

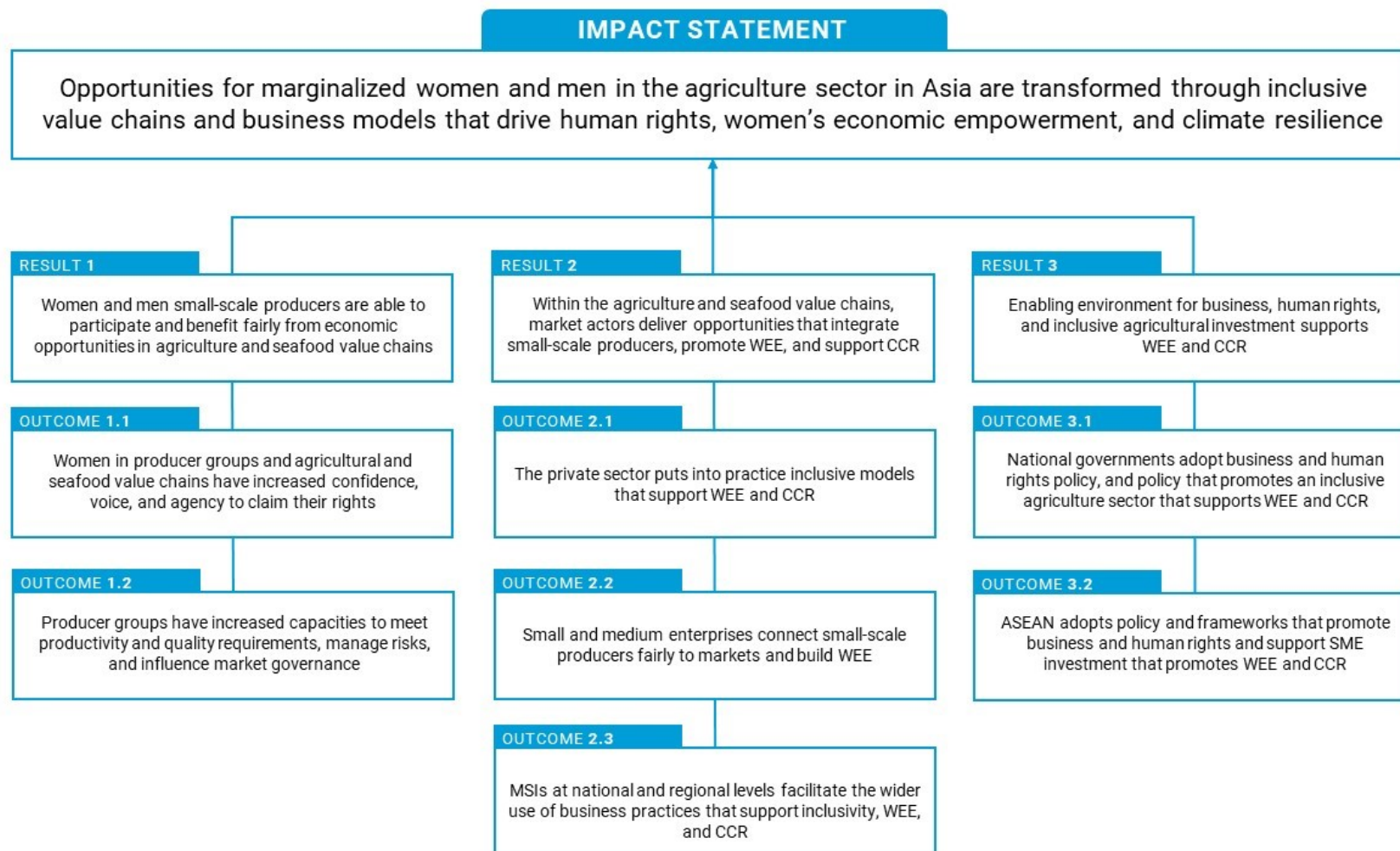
GRAISEA 2 worked simultaneously at three levels (i.e. producer, private sector, and government), and across three thematic priorities (i.e. WEE and promoting women's rights and addressing unequal power relations; strengthening CCR and reducing vulnerability; and collaboration with, and influencing of, the private sector on inclusive business practices and models).

GRAISEA's change pathways are summarized below:

1. **Producer level (Result 1):** Training and mobilizing producer groups and raising awareness and building capacity on WEE and CCR.
2. **Private sector engagement from local and regional to international levels (Result 2):** Working directly with individual businesses and MSIs on inclusive and responsible business practices, particularly on WEE and CCR practices.
3. **Policy development at the national and regional levels (Result 3):** Engaging with governments and regional ASEAN bodies in issues of business and human rights and inclusive business policies that drive WEE and CCR.

Box 2. GRAISEA 2 result framework

GRAISEA 2 was implemented at multiple levels to drive changes by working with marginalized rice and shrimp small-scale farmers to build their capacity, engaging private sector actors to promote WEE and CCR, and influencing policymaking bodies such as the ASEAN.



To deliver a **program that can trigger system change**, GRAISEA 2 adopted a systems change approach, while ensuring that this was centered on support to human rights and gender transformation. To do this effectively, we took the following steps:

- Identified key value chains (rice and shrimp/seafood) that had the biggest opportunity to have an impact on poverty and inequality.
- Carried out diagnostic analyses to identify the underlying causes (rather than symptoms) of inequality in markets (e.g. gender market maps and social norms diagnostics).
- Investigated issues on WEE and climate-adaptive agriculture, as well as how these intersected with private sector and governing bodies.
- Engaged at multiple points in the agricultural system to trigger systemic shifts notably on four points: producer groups, MSMEs, large companies/lead firms, and formal rules and regulations (and informal rules and social norms).
- Built relationships and leveraged the actions of key market players — public and private, formal and informal — to bring about extensive and deep-seated change that is owned by the actors in question.
- Supported impact at scale — influencing actors with significant leverage, scaling up successful system changes, and supporting regional solutions.



THE APPROACHES THAT GUIDED OUR WORK AND DROVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE

GRAISEA recognized that sustainable solutions extend beyond short-term fixes, focusing more on long-term impact by reshaping the very systems that underpin issues like human rights violations and gender inequality in the agriculture sector.

Throughout our journey, we embraced the following approaches, harnessing a wide range of perspectives and resources to drive meaningful change.

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A combined regional and country strategy

We initiated change by fostering collaboration among a wide range of national and multinational stakeholders, facilitating their collective efforts to address transboundary challenges. The aim was to create scalable solutions that could be replicated across the region, simultaneously leveraging opportunities to influence market and value chain policies.

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A human rights approach

This was integrated into each stage of the program cycle to ensure the participation of specific groups at country and regional levels, including human rights organizations, WROs, community-based organizations and local NGOs, and government agencies. Our country teams purposely

selected communities that were marginalized in economic and social terms.

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A market systems approach

Under this approach, the program focused on bringing about large-scale systems in agricultural markets to support farmers and workers by influencing system actors to make sustainable and scalable changes in their operations, policies, and practices.

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Focusing on core business models over corporate social responsibility (CSR)

We worked on inclusive and responsible business practices through collaborations and partnerships on actions that went beyond CSR to achieve sustainability and scalability through shifts in core business models.

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Influencing rules and norms (formal and informal)

We approached our programming by understanding how market systems were shaped, while delivering equity for women and men small-scale producers through working with MSIs and promoting policy change to create regulatory incentives for inclusive and responsible business behavior.





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Promoting women's economic justice

GRAISEA aimed to change market systems (thinking, practices, roles, policies) that systematically discriminate against women, so that economic development contributes sustainably to gender justice. Our work encompassed social norms that often constrain women in taking up certain types of economic roles, gender-based violence that can often be exacerbated when women gain access to economic opportunities, and the unfair distribution of care work that limits the economic opportunities women can pursue.

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Recognizing the growing impact of climate variability

We focused on understanding and addressing the effects of climate change on all actors in the value chain (i.e. small-scale producers, input providers, service providers, processors, buyers, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers), increasing small-scale producers' climate resilience (i.e. adaptive, absorptive, and transformative capacity), and promoting the resilience of the value chain as a whole.

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Working in partnerships

Our work built on the coordinated effort of a variety of different national and regional organizations who function as governing organizations, civil society organizations, and private sector companies.

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Leverage other Oxfam programs in Southeast Asia

In particular, we worked with Fair Finance Asia to influence the development of a sustainable finance sector and the Social Protection Program to enable a regional policy framework on addressing unpaid care and domestic work in the region.

Box 3. Rising to the occasion: Supporting a strong union of cooperatives in Cambodia



High potential but limited farmer power in the rice sector

In Cambodia, GRAISEA has taken a new approach to improve the supporting ecosystem around cooperatives. Specifically, it has strengthened the Preah Vihear Mean Chey Union of Agricultural Cooperative (PMUAC) to better manage its finances and operations, as well as to provide enhanced services to its members, such as information to farmers on rice market prices and cooperative audits. This has not just empowered farmers but also contributed to the cooperative union, which has grown from eight cooperative members in 2016 to 25 in 2023, representing over 5,000 members.

Moreover, by the end of 2022, PMUAC was financially sustainable with dues from its members now exceeding costs. Since its establishment, 15 other cooperative unions have been established in Cambodia, which are actively learning from PMUAC.

A cooperative with growing membership and national influence

GRAISEA's support has led to significant changes in PMUAC. It is financially stable and considered well-managed. Services that GRAISEA supported PMUAC to start providing to its members — such as on financial policies and audits, and linking to buyers — are still being provided by PMUAC after GRAISEA's support has ended. The provision of rice price information is also set to continue after the program ends.

This increase in services has contributed to PMUAC's remarkable growth from eight cooperatives in 2016 to 25 cooperatives across Preah Vihear province in 2023, representing 5,012 farmers (of whom 3,498 are women). These changes seem highly sustainable as well. PMUAC, as of 2022, remained profitable, with member-cooperatives each paying an annual membership fee.

In addition, all 5,012 farmers have received rice price information from PMUAC via their cooperatives. This is allowing them to make informed decisions when negotiating with buyers and is expected to lead to better prices.

PMUAC has also provided financial audits of three cooperatives in Sangkum Thmei, which approximately represent 600 farmers, and is expected to conduct audits of further cooperatives on request in the future.

The potential does not stop in Preah Vihear. Since PMUAC's establishment, 15 other cooperative unions have been established in Cambodia to provide service and support to their member-cooperatives — a process that GRAISEA actively supports through bringing other unions to see how PMUAC works.

This story is part of the GRAISEA impact story compilation that you can read in full [here](#).



GRAISEA'S CROSS- CUTTING THEMES: WEE, IB, AND CCR

In its pursuit of lasting change in Southeast Asia, the GRAISEA program strategically focused on three core areas: women's economic empowerment (WEE), inclusive business (IB), and climate change resilience (CCR). These interlinked pillars formed the foundation of GRAISEA's comprehensive approach to driving social and economic transformation in the region. By addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within each of these areas, we sought to create a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient future for women and men farmers and their communities, businesses, and the environment across Southeast Asia.



WEE

GRAISEA played a significant role in transforming opportunities for women and men small-scale producers in Southeast Asia. It helped in recognizing and highlighting the essential role of women as market participants (i.e. producers, processors, laborers, entrepreneurs, and leaders) across various segments of the value chains.

Using WEE tools and approaches: Approaches like the Gender Action Learning System, social norms diagnostics, gender market systems, and rapid care analysis helped uncover and address unequal labor divisions, decision-making power, and asset control.

Engaging private sector practice with medium- and large-sized businesses: We worked with private sector companies to promote gender equality, an ongoing journey where companies are translating their understanding into practical steps.

Supporting MSIs via standards and policies: We actively supported MSIs at national and regional levels to influence government policies and encourage inclusive business practices.

Introducing WEE to intergovernmental bodies: Successful initiatives included introducing scorecards and tools for promoting WEE in the Philippines and advocating for WEE inclusion in National Action Plans or local legislation.



IB

The inclusive and responsible business approach to engage the private sector as driver for change and sustaining impact gains was a key focus for GRAISEA, with emphasis on ensuring that IB will contribute in realizing GRAISEA's WEE and CCR aspirations.

We worked with producer groups in the rice and shrimp value chains to enhance their capacities and agency in promoting their own interest, enabling easier access to resources, and complying with quality standards as suppliers of goods, services, and capable workers to businesses.

GRAISEA's partnership with 150 producer groups and agricultural cooperatives in Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Pakistan improved the management practices of these groups and cooperatives as business hubs, promoted women leadership, enhanced capacities on agricultural production, and established linkages with public and private sector partners.

This was complemented in parallel by a comprehensive engagement with the private sector that aimed to make companies more inclusive and responsible in their approach to producer groups, workers, and suppliers. This was reflected in GRAISEA's engagement with over 90 small to large private companies that improved business operation models, facilitated engagements with producer groups, contributed in streamlining procurement practices, and established a regional and global network of private sector partners.



CCR

GRAISEA integrated CCR into its work across Southeast Asia, implementing initiatives to build climate resilience among farmers and private sector companies in two value chains. Vulnerability Risk Assessment (VRA) tools were used to identify climate change impacts on social and physical elements of value chains, with partner-led VRAs conducted in Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Vietnam.

In Indonesia, GRAISEA conducted a climate risk and vulnerability study involving small-scale farming communities and seafood companies. This led to engagements on CCR and intercropping with businesses like PT ATINA. In Vietnam, VRA results prompted the development of a risk reserve fund for climate change impacts, while mobile applications (i.e. Aware Hero and Rice Hero) were created to provide disaster warnings and climate services. Read story [here](#).

GRAISEA also worked with the business community on CCR, collaborating with the Ministry of Environment and Nature Resource in Vietnam to develop indicators for the rice sector, known as the Climate and Environment Business Index.

In Pakistan and Cambodia, GRAISEA facilitated collaboration between farmers and private sector companies to share climate change risks, resulting in contracts with CCR provisions, soft loans for producers, and advocacy for climate-resilient technologies in government programs.

Box 4. Altering trade: Working toward a shrimp sector that benefits farmers



Since 2018, GRAISEA had been working in Indonesia toward inclusive and responsible shrimp value chain, collaboratively between CSOs, government, the private sector, farmers, and communities. The project was aimed at complementing the national agenda to achieve SDGs through smallholders' empowerment, especially women.

A key element has been to collaborate with shrimp processor PT ATINA to develop a new business model. Here, PT ATINA has invested in a commission-based farmer coordinator model to provide technical support and a secure market to farmers in return for more reliable and higher quality shrimp for export. Over time, this has evolved considerably. Collaboration has expanded to improving working conditions for factory workers, while PT ATINA has scaled up the farmer model without program support with farmers in other parts of Indonesia. The benefits to smallholder farmers have been high, with increased productivity, climate change resilience, and market access for more than 1,930 farmers, as well as improved working conditions for 280 workers.

A more secure shrimp market and supply chain

By the end of 2022, PT ATINA has been using the model to reach 1,132 farmers it sources from in Pinrang. These farmers are now receiving increasing production training, as well as access to new technology and equipment and better quality inputs.

The farmers have experienced significant increases in productivity and have more secure market access. With PT ATINA increasing shrimp purchases in 2021 by 67 tons from 2020, incomes have increased by 68%, which translates to nearly USD 522,000 increased revenue for farmers. Average farmer incomes are estimated to have increased nearly 10% in the last year alone. However, there is also evidence that farmer input costs are also increasing.

Of particular importance, farmers are more resistant to the effects of climate change, with improved networks to access support, including the coordinators and PT ATINA's internal control systems team — while key inputs are much more available (e.g., more climate change-resistant fry).

Further, though early on, changes on safeguarding and grievance policies have so far benefited 280 staff. The impact though has not stopped there. The new model is very popular at PT ATINA and highly sustainable, as it helps ensure the quality and reliability of shrimp for processing; the traceability, which is more and more important to international buyers; and the social impact that is so important to PT ATINA.

This story is part of the GRAISEA impact story compilation that you can read in full [here](#).

OUR CORE REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED



ON INFLUENCING PRODUCER GROUPS



To enable transformational change for women farmers, safe spaces need to be created for women to come together for alliance building, discussing important issues including climate impacts and decision making. For this to happen, WROs and their collaboration with relevant entities, particularly producer groups, should be integrated into program design because WROs often offer the best capacities to mobilize, facilitate, and integrate gender norms and agricultural issues faced by women farmers. There is also a recognition that WEE must be accompanied by addressing gender norms that prevent women from participating in economic opportunities.



For producer groups/cooperatives to enhance the value they provide to their smallholder farmer-members, besides capacity building, resources (e.g. real-time climate and market information and digital applications for such information) and safe spaces facilitated and monitored by a third party like CSOs or government agencies are necessary for producer groups/cooperatives to negotiate better prices and/or contracts. Economical viability plays a crucial role in the sustainability of producer groups/cooperatives.



Influencing work on CCR should be strongly based on voices and actions of smallholder farmer-communities for it to be transformational and sustainable. Gender-based climate impacts should be integrated in the strategy. Producer groups and WROs could play a bigger role in facilitating these.



MSIs play an important role in facilitating system change and, thus, impact at scale. The role of producer groups in MSIs should be strengthened through creating spaces for their participation and collaboration. This allows the action plans of MSIs to better respond to the needs of local farmer groups and agriculture cooperatives.

ON INFLUENCING THE PRIVATE SECTOR



For successful and sustainable change in businesses, engagement of their leadership is critical. This allows a program to generate commitment from leadership level to improve their policy and practice for both their employees and the smallholder farmers who sell to them. Based on GRAISEA's experience, the best results were achieved when businesses reviewed their policies and put in place policy enhancements and a strategy on how to consciously engage women and smallholder farmers in their value chain.



To effectively engage and influence the private sector, it is important to do early and comprehensive assessment to understand the needs, incentives, motives, vulnerabilities, and expectations of target businesses and the ecosystem in which they operate in, including information on market demand such as international standards, buyers, and consumers.



Private sector partnerships should be diverse and flexible. Strategies and capacity building activities should be adapted and customised for different companies depending on their size, level of development and business model, market system, and their capacity to influence other private sectors. Long-term strategic plan including a specific buyer engagement team to engage with foreign buyers should be developed to promote responsible supply chain.



When engaging companies for WEE, GRAISEA's experience shows that companies that are already generating steady profit are more likely to implement WEE-related initiatives as they are perceived to be more indirect or take longer time to benefit the companies economically. Working with MSIs, associations, and platforms enables a program to have stronger voice to influence private sector policies and management. It also provides higher potential to create impact at scale.

ON INFLUENCING DUTY BEARERS AND POLICYMAKERS



The 'borrowing power' strategy proved effective in engaging ASEAN. To navigate the complexity of ASEAN and lobbying restrictions, ISEA forged partnerships with multilateral agencies like UNESCAP and UN Women, which hold influence within ASEAN and its member states. PhilWEN adopted a similar approach, securing endorsements from National Government Agencies to collaborate with their regional counterparts.



Research is key in effective lobbying and advocacy strategies. It helps develop clear and specific policy asks rather than broad calls or generic approach. For instance, in the Philippines, political mapping and research were crucial in identifying key decision makers and their priorities.



Having multiple approaches in carrying out policy engagements was affirmed by GRAISEA partners. Early thinking about policy implementation to provide information on costs and benefits, turning compelling policy agenda into policy brief, building constructive relationships through evidence-based research, and stronger media engagement and more focused campaigning to shape public narratives and collect sentiments were among the multiple strategies GRAISEA employed to engage policymakers in dialogues and policy development successfully.



Be adaptive, progressive, and resilient in planning and implementation. The lack of physical engagement with partners and communities due to COVID-19, changes in leadership, and political context had taught GRAISEA to realign its engagement strategies, utilizing online and alternative communication methods to ensure processes were inclusive and participatory when engaging different stakeholders and decision makers.

OUR TRIUMPHS: CELEBRATING GRAISEA'S MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In the span of five years (2018–2023), GRAISEA made a direct positive impact on 36,084 people (or 8,020 households), who all reported an increase in their net income, with 1,681,273 farmers and workers projected as benefiting or potentially benefiting, and broader impacts at the policy level and the social justice sector expected over time.

The outcome of an independent evaluation noted that across Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Vietnam, GRAISEA created a sustainable foundation for higher farmers' income in the long-run by introducing advanced production techniques, connecting farmers with purchasing companies, nurturing the linkage between farmers and lead firms who provided support (inputs and free technical training) at discount prices, enhancing the farmers' management skills, supporting farmers with income diversification strategies, providing farmers with risk mitigation knowledge and skills, and ensuring better access to information particularly on local policies.

GRAISEA is not a standard economic development program — it is gender transformative and, to a lesser extent, a climate transformative program. On this, the evaluation noted that a substantial number of women (3,116) are now generating additional income for their households, are more involved in household decision-making related to agricultural production, and are spending less time on unpaid care and domestic work. More importantly, for the long term, hundreds of women across four countries are now taking leadership roles in producer groups and businesses — not just changing their lives but becoming role models for their communities and beyond.

Although not included as program impact indicators, the evaluation also highlighted other significant impacts for

farmers, such as more dependable markets and reduced risks to climate change. For instance, the Hero Aware app that was not included in the quantitative evaluation is increasing farmer resilience to weather-based disasters across Vietnam and is a model that warrants further research and potential upscaling in the region.

GRAISEA's program impact also significantly went beyond direct beneficiaries, as it adopted a systems change approach aimed at influencing how agricultural markets work. Farmers and cooperatives shared their successes with other communities. Businesses and government agencies tested pilots with the communities and scaled up into business operations where successful.

These system-level changes included 133 producer groups and WROs providing more value to their members, 52 businesses adopting new initiatives, 9 MSIs adopting new initiatives and/or standards, and 18 government agencies adopting new initiatives and/or policies. These included not just businesses and farmer groups in the region but four businesses based in Europe that procure from Southeast Asia, and two global agricultural standards that have matured and become more inclusive (i.e. SRP and ASIC).



Changes in national and regional policies were documented, such as the Vietnamese government officially recognizing the SRP Standard in its rice sector development plans. Some of the most significant changes were captured into a compilation of impact stories that can be read [here](#).

Overall, it is projected that 1,681,273 farmers and workers have benefited/would potentially benefit from the policy and practice changes in government agencies and companies.

The impact of GRAISEA 2 will likely grow more over time with many further changes likely to happen in the future after program closure. This is the case for all types of market change but is particularly the case with government policy changes. Such changes typically do not happen in the life span of a development program and can take a decade or more to bear fruit.

For instance, GRAISEA 2 supported two proposed national laws in the Philippines on social enterprises and inclusive business. If either were legislated, the nationwide impact will help hundreds of thousands of people. These proposed laws have made significant strides in the Philippine legislative process, with the

proposed Social Enterprise Law likely to be enacted in the coming years.

Changes in ASEAN policy can take longer time, but their regional impact will even be more transformative. In many cases, changes made in engaging the ASEAN may not yet have a concrete impact on farmers and workers but likely will in the years to come, like the ASEAN Economic Community's commitment to consult WROs and include gender equity in its 2025–2035 workplan.

Beyond this, GRAISEA 2 made a significant impact on CSOs in the region by enhancing their capacity and supporting networks of organizations to work and collaborate together. This is more important than ever with the shrinking civic space in the region.

GRAISEA 2 also contributed to the capacity and knowledge of the wider development sector. In its last year, GRAISEA 2 published its final evaluation outcome, which highlighted the potential of digital technology and inclusive contract farming in addressing poverty and gender inequities in the agricultural sector, as well as lessons learned on ensuring regional coordination in programming. Blogs about [ways on addressing power in global value chains](#) and [lessons on being country led](#) were likewise published. Lessons on influencing market actors on WEE and CCR were shared with the NGO members of the Asia Value Chain Capacity Building Network.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

The second phase of the GRAISEA program built upon the achievements and learnings from its first phase (2015–2018). It was designed to contribute in enabling the Government of Sweden's regional cooperation strategy for Asia and the Pacific (2016–2021), which sought to support increased regional integration and cooperation for sustainable development.

GRAISEA 2 was implemented with funding support from the Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok from August 2018 to July 2021. A no-cost extension of two years until July 2023 was approved by the Embassy in consideration of the original program theory of change with a scope of five years to catch up on the delays and disruptions caused by COVID-19, and enhance the harvesting of learning and evidence toward sustaining the program outcome.

GRAISEA 2 was implemented in four member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN (i.e. Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines) and Pakistan, and in two value chains (i.e. shrimp and rice).

OUR RESOURCES

GRAISEA's publications are integral to our evidence-based approach. They serve as a valuable resource for informed decision making, policy influencing, and impactful interventions. Covering topics like women's human rights and business, unpaid care and domestic work, and inclusive business practices, among others, these publications play a pivotal role in shaping policies and fostering positive change in Southeast Asia's development landscape.

Click on the image to download the publication.

For more publications, check out our website [here](https://www.oxfam.org).



Women's human rights and business: What ASEAN gov'ts and businesses can do to support gender equality and



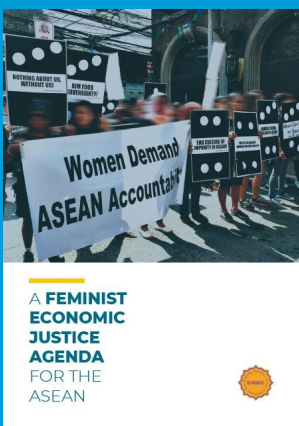
Guidelines for transformational partnerships and WEE in agricultural value chains



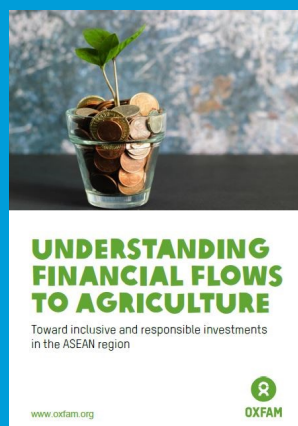
ASEAN through a gender lens: Recommendations for the full implementation of the Action Agenda on Mainstreaming WEE in ASEAN



An assessment of overall effectiveness of agricultural MSIs with specific attention to smallholder inclusiveness



A feminist economic justice agenda for the ASEAN



Understanding financial flows to agriculture: Toward inclusive and responsible investments in the ASEAN region



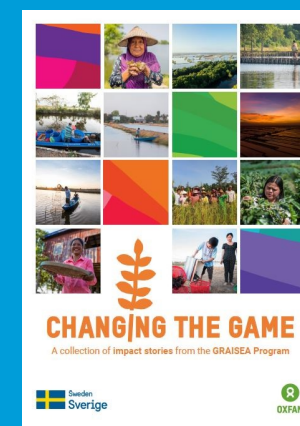
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