

Category	: International Rice Research Conference
Select Theme	: Social inclusion and gender equality
Endorsement email	:
Keyword 1	: Impact of agricultural research
Keyword 2	:
Keyword 3	:
Title of Entry	: Investigating BMP adoption effects on the lives of rural women in Myanmar
Presenting author	: Melanie Connor
Presenting author email	: m.connor@irri.org
Co author 1	: Su Su San
Co author 2	:
Affiliation presenting author	: International Rice Research Institute
Affiliation 1	: International Rice Research Institute, Myanmar
Affiliation 2	:
Select only one type of presentation	: 15 minute oral presentation

Abstract : The roles of rural women are manifold and encompass a variety of activities including household management, farming and community duties. Changes in rice production and productivity affect men and women differently. Therefore it is necessary to understand these gender dynamics in order to provide the right support to women especially concerning diversifying income-generating activities and providing appropriate services in rural areas to assist women managing change and enhance their welfare. The present study aims to investigate the role of rural women in Myanmar; how adoption of best management practices (BMPs) impacted on their traditional roles and what effects these changes have for families and the community. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 married women (mean age 49.9 years, SD = 9.7), who were selected from a pool of famers who have adopted BMPs. Women were firstly asked to describe their everyday life and were then prompted to explain the changes they have experienced since BMPs have been introduced. Data were analyzed by means of NVIVO and qualitative content analysis. There have been a great variety of changes for the families since BMPs have been rolled out. These changes have impacted not only on a personal level but also at a community level. Families use the additional income to invest in farming; they invest into their health through improved nutrition and in their children by enabling them to take part in education rather than assisting with farm work. Furthermore, a great amount of time and finances are spent on community activities, which appear to strengthen community bonds and contribute to improved infrastructure e.g. roads. It seemed that people gained not only materialistic advances from BMPs, they also broadened their knowledge, which they were able to transfer into other areas of agriculture. It is of great importance to recognize the role rural women play and to harness the contributions they make to their communities and families. Therefore, providing and facilitating a variety of options to rural women will facilitate more rapid improvement in livelihoods of smallholder families and in development of agricultural production.

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