

# PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Development Programme

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## New “Gender Database” Gives Detailed Information on Status of Thai Women

**Bangkok 6 March** – For the first time, Thai policy-makers will be able to easily compare detailed information on the status of women by province, region and rural and urban areas, thanks to a database that centralizes statistics on women and women’s issues, being launched today.

The database collects already-existing statistics from across Thailand and makes them easily accessible to policy makers, researchers, and academics. The project is a joint initiative of the Office of Women’s Affairs and Family Development, under the Ministry for Social Development and Human Security, and the UN Development Programme in Thailand.

“It has sometimes been difficult to address women’s issues in Thailand because detailed information about those issues is hard to find,” said Gwi-Yeop Son, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Thailand. “This database will allow analysts and officials to find the data that they need easily, and back up their recommendations to policy-makers with concrete numbers.”

A report about the database is being released today. The report highlights a number of interesting statistics about the role of women in Thailand, such as:

- The gap in household income between households headed by women and those headed by men has closed in recent years. Female-headed households had 90% of the income of male-headed households in 2006, up from 83% in 2004.
- Nationally, computer literacy rates are equal for men and women (at 25.9%). However, when looking only at people aged 15-24, Thai young women are more computer-literate than young men (53.5% vs. 47.5%).
- Maternal mortality rates are highest in the South, at about 19 per 100,000 live births, compared to about 12 nationally.
- Among Thai people over the age of 60, 54% are women and 46% are men. Women make up two-thirds of elderly people living alone.
- On average, women spent 2.7 hours per day on unpaid household maintenance and 3.3 hours per day on unpaid care for other family members, compared with 1.5 hours and 2 hours respectively by men.

One of the most useful tools in the new database is the ability to easily make detailed comparisons by region, by rural vs. urban areas, and by province. This is expected to make it easier to clearly identify gaps in services for women, and effectively target resources to deal with those needs

“Women play a major role in the Thai economy, and Thailand has a good record of commitments to gender equality. However, women do not always have a status equal to their role in society,” said Gwi-Yeop Son. “We hope this database will help develop policies and new partnerships between the government and civil society that promote women’s equality and women’s rights.”

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