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Gender, Women's Livelihood in Conflict Area:
A Case Study of Pattani Province, Deep South of Thailand

Vilasinee Sukka

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

This study addresses the problem of Muslim women, who become single heads of households when their male breadwinners are absent. A gender perspective will be applied in order to analyze Muslim women's role and status in society. Muslim women acting as single heads of households simply go against traditionally inherited gender norms of Muslim women, as they are expected to perform the roles of an obedient daughter, dutiful wife and good mother who serve as role models for their children. However, the sudden change of the roles of Muslim women affects their ways of life, as can be witnessed in this study.

 The main objectives of this study are 1) to examine the roles of Muslim women as breadwinners of the families with regards to securing their families' livelihoods; 2) to explore the constraints of achieving this objective; and 3) to closely examine the changing roles of Muslim women in securing their livelihoods. As will be demonstrated in this study, at present the family and social roles of Muslim women, who have been affected by political violence, are changing. The main sources of family incomes are now generated by women as breadwinners. One of the major findings of this report is that, despite being satisfied with their personal life and the economic situation of their families, the women continued to struggle hard to secure their own and their families' livelihoods.

The arguments developed in this study are based on primary data collection. The study field is Pattani province in Southern Thailand and testimonies were given by Muslim women, acting as family breadwinners and who have been affected by the violent conflicts in Southern Thailand. In this particular geographical area, we interviewed many widows and other women whose husbands have been detained in prison for alleged involvements in violent activities. Suggestions will be given at the end of the paper as to how to alleviate the problems Muslim women face associated with violence in Southern Thailand.

Keywords: Gender, Livelihoods, Muslim women as breadwinners, Single head of household, violence in Southern Thailand, political conflicts, Pattani Province, Thailand.

1. Introduction

The violent conflict between the Thai authorities and the separatists in Thailand's Deep South has existed since 2001, but violence has accelerated sharply after January 2004 (McCargo, 2006) because of the national policies from Thai government during Prime Minister Thaksin Shinnawatra's period.

However, the roots of this conflict can be dated back to the 1950s when part of the insurgency movement sought to join the Malaysian Federation, arguing that the border provinces of Thailand had ended up on the wrong side of an arbitrary line drawn between Siam and British Malaya in the early twentieth century. In the decades that followed the above event, the militants have consistently demanded an independent Pattani state (McCargo, 2006).

Pattani province is located at a great distance from the center of the Bangkok-based Thai government. Moreover, its population – the majority of whom are Muslims – have developed the feeling of uniqueness and independence from Central Thailand (Royal Thai Embassy, Riyad, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2012). Professor Duncan McCargo, who has long been studied about conflict in southern part of Thailand, characterizes the Siamese occupation of Pattani since mid-1880s onward as a form of colonization in which Bangkok pursued a policy of assimilation and standardization, making few concessions to the distinctive history and character of the region. Like the rest of Thailand, the Southern border provinces were administered by the highly centralized government in Bangkok. The region has a long tradition of resistance to the ruling of the Bangkok administration (Appleyard & Neelapaijit, 2012).

Due to the long historical conflict which has been on-going in the Deep South of Thailand, Southern Thai authorities have persistently failed to establish legitimate participatory rules in the Malay-Muslim majority provinces of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat. It seems that the actions of the armed Thai forces are not only unsuitable to solve this problem, but their use of arms seems to have worsened the situation. As for the religion, Islam seems to be a rhetorical resource selectively invoked by militant groups in the Thai South, rather than the source of their focal motivation (McCargo, 2008). Admittedly, the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRC) came to a conclusion that the historical background of the

region is one of the key factors used to highlight the uniqueness of the area and to offer justifications for the use of violence in the Deep South of Thailand. In late 18th century as Pattani stopped paying tribute to Siam, the central authority sent a naval force to attack Pattani. The consequence of this action was a conflict between the central Thai authority and regional leaders in the South over the loss of vested interests and prestige on the part of the local leaders. As a result, violence in the southern border provinces may be regarded as a long-term historical problem of that part of Thailand. The history of previous Pattani state-hood does not match with the official records of the central Thai government, nor with the historical consciousness of the people concerning their home-land which remains powerful in their minds to this day.

1.1 Overview

For over a decade (approximately from 2004 until recently), Thailand's three southern-most provinces have been caught up in the vicious cycle of violence. Drive-by shootings, bombs, both thrown at the targets and remotely triggered hurting random victims, were commonly used in this conflict. Vicious assaults on teachers and the targeting of monks and moderate Muslims regularly occurred. Since the conflict has been persistent in Thailand's Deep South, under the Prem Tinsulanond government (1980-1988), an agreement aimed at ending the violence was reached, such as the granting of amnesties to former militants, and the set up of new security and governance arrangement in the area, coordinated by the Southern Border Provinces Administration Center (SBPAC) (Appleyard & Neelapaijit, 2012). Due to the role of SBPAC, the violence was pacified for a decade. However, during Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's first term (2001-2005), the security situation in the Deep South significantly deteriorated. The special administrative arrangements were dissolved by Thaksin and were replaced by highly unpopular police force in charge of security in the Deep South. These policies caused a significantly sharp rise in militancy, and a reemergence of violent resistance to the Thai state, which continues until today. Therefore, many families in the Deep South have personal, often tragic stories to tell on how they were affected by the acts of violence (ICRC). Military patrols were usually targeted by the insurgents, while bombs were also planted in markets, cafes, government buildings and other commercial locations. Professor Duncan McCargo of Leeds University, categorized the main victims of the violence and found that soldiers and members of the security forces were regularly on top of the casualty

lists. In addition, farmers, traders and factory workers were equally severely affected by the conflicts. Moreover, according to Deep South Watch (2012), Malay Muslim victims were the majority of the dead while Buddhist victims make up the majority of the injured.

The local culture of the three southern border provinces is also sharply distinct from the rest of Thailand. A survey by the Ministry of Interior (2007) revealed that the three provinces of Thailand comprised 1.87 million people. Surprisingly, Pattani is one of the three provinces of Thailand where the majority of the population are Malay Muslim, making up 88% of the population. They speak the Pattani Malay language, although many can also speak Thai. The Pattani Malays are very similar in ethnicity and culture to the Malays of Kelantan, Malaysia (Daraha, 2013) whereas Buddhist population accounts for only 20.1 percent, and around 0.6 percent of the population reside in other southern provinces. All of them are scattered throughout the urban and rural areas of the Southern provinces. Interestingly, the report by Office of the National Human Rights Commission (2006) highlighted that the growth rate of the Buddhist Thai population in the area declined greatly in the 15 years preceding the violent events that began in early 2004. The local Buddhist population raised concerns over the expanding Muslim population who were affected by poverty and by the lack of opportunities in life. The disproportionate number of the Muslim population posed a burden to the state, as tax revenues had to be directed towards taking care of the expanding Muslim population, who were largely poor, according to the Buddhist population in the South. The Muslim community was also unable to ensure that all their members play a productive role in society. This, in turn, poses national security risks to the country, and adds even further concerns to the Buddhist population residing in the Southern provinces.

Moreover, one recalls that conflicts continued to simmer between the government and separatist groups. Violent conflicts affect broadly family's livelihoods, especially for women. A considerable number of men, who were their families' breadwinners, either died during the conflicts, or were detained in prisons due to the emergency warrant. In addition, many victims were Muslims, who were accused of being munafiks (traitors to their religion), because they either worked openly for the Thai authorities, or were regarded as undercover informers (McCargo, 2008). When women lost their husbands or other family members, as they were killed in the fighting between the insurgency and the Thai military, they were often left alone to fend for themselves and their families. Muslim women in rural villages usually stayed at home and had no experience being the heads of their families, but suddenly they

were forced to become their families' breadwinners (Jamjuree, 2010). However, assuming that leading economic or political roles does not automatically empower vulnerable women because they are still expected to fulfill their traditional roles as nurturing wives and mothers, considering that these are the stereotypes mainly determined by religious beliefs, the new position as breadwinners of the family is not an easy task to assume for those women in the context of changing patterns of traditional gender roles, caused by violent conflicts. (Neelapaijit, 2009). Breadwinning roles left by their husbands can often be a source of constraint for some women. Therefore, many local development projects, which have been implemented by SBPAC, targeted vulnerable women to help empowering them.

Many income generating projects have been created for those who were considered direct victims of the violence.. Women become single heads of households but they are more likely to be excluded from accessing state institutions' services. It is a common situation for women in the Deep South, particularly Muslim women who have historically encountered this situation for a decade. In a nutshell, there are limited studies of changes in traditional gender order and women livelihoods. This study therefore emphasizes these two main areas.

1.2 Research Rationale

In a conflict situation, women usually become single heads of households. Women are able to participate in conflicts directly as combatants, or indirectly by facilitating violence through inciting male relatives to commit acts of violence (Koch, 2008). Both genders can be victims of a conflict; however, male victims still greatly outnumber female victims. Women are often abandoned as a consequence of the death of their male breadwinners. Supporting this notion, the study on living conditions of victims' families affected by the Pattani unrest during January – October 2007 found that the majority of casualties were Muslim male, accounting for around 95.8% of the overall casualties and they were heads of the households. This led to 73 % of women becoming single heads of their households (Chesoh, 2009). Women were usually left behind as a consequence of the violent conflict. The study titled "The Rehabilitation of the Widows in Pattani" also showed that an on-going violence during January 2004 – March 2012 led to approximately 2,450 women becoming widows as a result of the violence. This figure can be divided as follows: Narathiwat – 787 women, Yala – 689, Pattani – 898, and Songkhla – 76 (Daraha, 2013).

Furthermore, some literatures found that women's agencies have been derogated by seeing them as passive victims, and this has resulted in the perpetuation of gender stereotypes that reinforces inequalities in conflict situation. It can also be said that women and girls suffer disproportionately from violent conflicts compared to their male counterparts, and they are also subject to violence, disrupted livelihood and limited access to public services. The study of Brück and Schindler on the impact of conflict on household economic status shows that women became heads of the households after their husbands died (Brück & Schindler, 2007). It was commonly found that women and girls learned new skill-sets in order to sustain their livelihoods. The loss of people during a conflict weakens social relations and this is particularly true for women who face many difficulties in accessing state institutions' services (Koch, 2008). Conflict environment usually characterizes particular situations and the studies of vulnerable groups in conflict mostly target women. There have been numerous studies on women in conflict looking at various aspects. For example, the study on poverty, justice in conflict situations or women participation in peace processes and human insecurity can usually be found in academic publications. There has recently been growing recognition of women who can play various roles during the conflict due to a high loss of men as breadwinners of families. Moreover, gender perspectives have become increasingly prevalent within conflict and development research and practice in the recent decade (Nilsson, 2012).

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

- To explore changes in gender roles and its impact on patterns of livelihoods of women who have been affected by the conflict in Pattani province.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- To examine changes in traditional gender roles of women who have been affected by the conflict in Pattani province.
- To investigate the constraints on securing the livelihoods of women who have been affected by the conflict in Pattani province.

1.4 Research Questions

- How does the role of women change in a situation of conflict?
- How do women cope with/ manage changes of gender roles in the situation of conflict?
- What are the constraints/ limitations of women's livelihoods in the situation of conflict?

1.5 Scope and Delimitations

- The traditional gender role of Muslim women in the Deep South of Thailand itself is a broad issue. It is widely acknowledged that the religion (Islam) has been embedded in all aspects of the daily life of Muslims. Therefore, this study will mainly focus on Islamic practices of the roles of men and women in families as well as in an inheritance matter. The importance of family matters in the study is to demonstrate the role of breadwinners in households which is no longer represented by only men. On the one hand, the role of breadwinners is replaced by women. Not only is the traditional gender role of Muslim women distorted, but also their livelihoods have also been changed accordingly.

- As the conflict persists in the researched area, it is not possible to understand the situation of the informants' family in a post-conflict situation, since all of the informants are living with an on-going violent conflict. Therefore, the study aims to focus on social life of Muslim women after they had encountered the conflict. Hence, the terminology of "conflict" in this study refers to an "on-going conflict in Pattani province".

- Conducting research in this conflict area is a very sensitive issue and the loss of human lives is an important area of the study. However, informants may require an explanation of the significance of the study as well and had demanded that the researcher take responsibility for keeping the confidentiality of the information being given. As a result, the researcher will ensure the respondents' full confidentiality with regards to information provided by the informants.

- As the researcher cannot speak the local language (Malayu), this might lead to language constraints between the researcher and some of the informants. Therefore,

the researcher will contact local people (researcher's colleagues) who can speak Thai and Malayu very well to be an interpreter for this research.

1.6 Ethical Consideration

All respondents will be informed of the purpose and intended uses of the collected data, and the researcher should get permission before conducting any interview. In the analytical part, a clear distinction between informants' words and the researcher's analysis will be made. Anonymity will be guaranteed to every interviewee. While their words may not appear dangerous, they commented on a conflict which the Thai government has treated with heavy-handed repression, and civil society activists have been both threatened and killed for speaking out in the past (Nilsson, 2012).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Gender in Conflict

It is widely acknowledged that conflicts affect women, men, girls and boys differently. The negative impact of a conflict on gender relations and on women in particular has been well documented. According to UN Women (Lukatela, 2012), it was stated that in the post-conflict contexts, 30–40 per cent of households are female-headed. One review of post-conflict countries found that in Angola, Kosovo, Mozambique, and Somalia, there were a great number of men who were killed and widows now make up more than half of the population of all adult women. Similarly, the study titled "Gender in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Environment" showed that fragility and conflict affected women, men, boys and girls differently (Koch, 2008). The most negatively affected are the poorest and the most vulnerable groups in society, including women and children. Those groups can be defined in terms of poverty, lack of access to justice and physical insecurity that often characterizes fragile states. While state-society relations are weak in most fragile states, this is particularly pronounced for female citizens who have very limited access to state institutions' services.

Woroniuk, (as cited in "Gender Approaches in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations") provides a description of gender differences and inequalities which may be relevant in conflict situations (*Gender Approaches in Conflict and Post-conflict situations*, 2002), as seen below.

Table 1: Element of Conflict Situations and Possible Gender Dimension

Element of Conflict Situations and Possible Gender Dimension	
Element of Conflict Situations	**Possible Gender Dimensions**
Pre-conflict situation	
Increased mobilization of soldiers	Increased commercial sex trade (including child prostitution) around military bases and army camps.
Nationalist propaganda used to increase support for military action	Gender stereotypes and specific definitions of masculinity and femininity are often promoted. There may be increased pressure on men to 'defend the nation.'
Mobilization of pro-peace activists and organizations	Women have been active in peace movements – both generally and in women-specific organizations. Women have often drawn moral authority from their role as mothers, but they have also been able to step outside traditional roles during conflict situations, taking up public roles in relief and political organizations.
Increasing human rights violations	Women's rights are not always recognized as human rights. Gender-based violence may increase.
During conflict situations	
Element of Conflict Situations	**Possible Gender Dimensions**
Psychological trauma, physical violence, casualties and death	Men tend to be the primary soldiers/combatants. Yet, in various conflicts, women have made up significant numbers of combatants. Women and girls are often victims of sexual violence (including rape, sexual mutilation, sexual humiliation, forced prostitution and forced pregnancy) during armed conflict.

Element of Conflict Situations and Possible Gender Dimension	
Element of Conflict Situations	**Possible Gender Dimensions**
Social networks disrupted and destroyed – changes in family structures and Composition	Gender relations can be subject to stress and change. The traditional division of labor within a family may be under pressure. Survival strategies often necessitate changes in the gender division of labor. Women may become responsible for an increased number of dependents.
Mobilization of people for conflict. Everyday life and work disrupted	Women's role as provider of the everyday needs of the family may mean increased stress and work as basic goods are more difficult to locate. Girls may also face an increased workload. Non-combatant men may also experience stress related to their domestic gender roles if they are expected, but unable, to provide for their families.
Material shortages (shortages of food, health care, water, fuel, etc)	Women's role as provider of the everyday needs of the family may mean increased stress and work as basic goods are more difficult to locate. Girls may also face an increased workload. Non-combatant men may also experience stress related to their domestic gender roles if they are expected, but unable, to provide for their families.
Creation of refugees and displaced people	People's ability to respond to an emergency situation is influenced by whether they are male or female. Women and men refugees (as well as boys and girls) often have different needs and priorities.
Dialogue and peace negotiations	Women are often excluded from formal discussions given their lack of participation and access in pre-conflict decision-making organizations and institutions.

Element of Conflict Situations and Possible Gender Dimension	
Element of Conflict Situations	**Possible Gender Dimensions**
During reconstruction and rehabilitation	
Element of Conflict Situations	**Possible Gender Dimensions**
Political negotiations and planning to implement peace accords	Men and women's participation in these processes tends to vary, with women often playing only minor roles in formal negotiations or policy making.
Media used to communicate messages	Women's unequal access to media may mean that their interests, needs and perspectives are not represented and discussed.
Use of outside investigators, peacekeepers, etc.	Officials are not generally trained in gender equality issues (women's rights as human rights, how to recognize and deal with gender-specific violence). Women and girls have been harassed and sexually assaulted by peacekeepers.
Holding of elections	Women face specific obstacles in voting, in standing for election and in having gender equality issues discussed as election issues.
Internal investments in employment creation, health care, etc.	Reconstruction programs may not recognize or give priority to supporting women's and girls' health needs, domestic responsibilities or needs for skills training and credit.
Demobilization of combatants	Combatants are often assumed to be all male. If priority is granted to young men, women do not benefit from land allocations, credit schemes, etc.
Measures to increase the capacity of and confidence in civil society	Women's participation in community organizations and NGOs is generally uneven. These organizations often lack the capacity and

Element of Conflict Situations and Possible Gender Dimension	
Element of Conflict Situations	**Possible Gender Dimensions**
	interest in granting priority to equality issues.

Source: Gender Approaches in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations of United Nations Development Programme, page 5.

By using a gender perspective, the researcher is able to understand how being male or female in particular situations contributes to their vulnerability, and defines their capabilities. It is commonly found that men are more likely to be conscripted or killed, women robbed and raped. Nilsson (2012) reveals that in early literature on the relationship between militarism, peace and gender, a dichotomy of men-as-warriors and women-as-victims usually emerged. There is so far little literature that addresses women who take direct action of a violent kind. This is not to state that women do not engage in conflicts as soldiers but it is the gender norm of most social groups that are likely to impede their initiating in conflicts (Harris, 2011).

However, there has been growing recognition in recent years of the changing roles of women, since women have taken an uncommon role during conflicts. According to the UNDP (2002), in armed conflicts women are likely to take over non-traditional roles. Similarly, the study of Oo and Kusakabe (2010) found that the internal conflict of eastern Myanmar led to unwilling participation of Karen women in military campaigns. Hence, war is a burden to women with regards to gender-based concept. Women not only take over non-traditional roles but are also still responsible for filling in the traditional role of caring for the elderly, children, orphans, the disabled or internally displaced relatives (Lukatela, 2012). The changes and transformations during the conflict forced women to be both actors and victims (*Gender Approaches in Conflict and Post-conflict situations*, 2002).

Nonetheless, there has been a gradual shift in the way women perceive themselves in conflicts. Their perception is moving away from being victims and passive objects towards being independent actors. As existing literature shows, there are many studies of women in conflicts with regard to women empowerment, women and peace building, women participation in politics and many more. Nilsson (2012) defined these attempts that can be seen as the concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society. Although recent studies on armed conflicts are largely confined to women, men victims are also considered as

subjects of the study with regards to gender inequality in conflicts. Since the 1990s, many scholars have demanded to use the gender framework in the study of conflicts (Nilsson, 2012). An attempt to point out the literal disappearance of men and boys in the study of conflicts was initially made by Andrea Cornwall. She argued that boys' experiences constitute an important gap in the literature (Cornwall, 1997, p.11; cited in Nilsson, 2012).

In response to conflicts, Gender Studies aims to gain a comprehensive and shared understanding of potential or on-going violent conflicts which have affected women and their livelihoods. Applying gender perspective to conflicts provides a better understanding of people who are living with an on-going conflict (Koch, 2008). Lukatela (2012) found that improving women's status in conflicts and post-conflicts enhances the welfare of the household and the community. Furthermore, during the conflict, women's role in the public has been expanded. Moreover, the numbers of women leaders and women mediators have increased. However, women's rights conversely were not protected, especially in terms of livelihoods and their household responsibility.

There is so far little literature that directly addresses the link between gender and the loss of people's livelihoods during conflicts especially for women heading households. In the economic literature on conflicts, there are various approaches in determining a definition of conflicts related to economic instabilities (Brück & Schindler, 2007). For instance, conflicts over land are hardly to be found as well as the lack of uses of violence. A conflict may only involve one district or region within a country, and possibly related to struggles over property rights and other assets. However, a conflict on a large–scale potentially has a structural impact on all spheres of the economy and society (Brück & Schindler, 2007).

2.2 Livelihood Approach

A livelihood perspective is derived from the work of Robert Chambers in the mid-1980s. Chambers developed the idea of "Sustainable Livelihoods" and initially offered the intention to enhance the efficiency of development cooperation. His concepts established the basics for the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA), as it was developed by the British Department for International Development (DFID) (Kollmair & Gamper, 2002).

A more recent definition of livelihood widely acknowledges that it is a perception of living. As Robert Chamber (1995; cited in Scoones, 2009)[1] states, the livelihood perspective considers how different people in different places live. A variety of definitions are provided in the literature, including, for example, 'the means of gaining a living'. Peter Castro (2002; cited in Naivinit, 2010) defined livelihoods as

> "… the set of capabilities, asset and activities that furnish the means for people to meet their basic needs and support their well-being. The building of livelihoods reflects and seeks to fulfill both material and experiential needs. Livelihoods are not simply a localized phenomenon, but connected by environmental, economic, political and cultural process to wider national and global arenas. "

Although concepts of 'livelihoods' are defined in various ways, people are the primary concerns in the livelihoods perspective. The approach is founded on a belief that people require a range of assets to achieve positive livelihood outcomes, however, there is no single category of asset which on its own is sufficient in order to fulfill all the various livelihood outcomes (Naivinit, 2010). In order to gain a better understanding on how people develop and maintain livelihoods, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), building on the work of practitioners and academics, developed the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) (*Guidance Note on Recovery Livelihood*)[2]

In contrast, Scoones (2009) pointed out the complexity of connotation and practices of the livelihood perspective. He demonstrated the instability of such concepts, bridging perspectives across various fields of rural development scholarship and practice. For instance, UNDP (The United Nation Development Program) defined livelihood as "the means, activities, entitlement and assets by which people make a living" (Naivinit, 2010). According to Krantz (2001) there is an attempt to decrease the complexity of the connotation of

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[1] Scoones, I. (2009). Livelihoods perspectives and rural development. *Journal of Peasant Studies, 36*

[2] The Guidance Notes on Recovery: Livelihoods was developed as collaboration between the International Recovery Platform (IRP) and United Nations Development Programme India (UNDP-India). SLF framework *(Guidance Note on Recovery Livelihood, p.1)* is an analysis tool, useful for understanding the many factors that affect a person's livelihood and how those factors interact with each other. The SLF views livelihoods as systems and provides a way to understand:
  1. the assets people draw upon
  2. the strategies they develop to make a living
  3. the context within which a livelihood is developed
  4. and those factors that make a livelihood more or less vulnerable to shocks and stresses

livelihood which has been made by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) and the British Department for International Development (DFID). They have put an effort to operationalizing the Sustainable Livelihood concept and approach. Leading proponent Ian Scoones of IDS proposed a modified definition of Sustainable Livelihood as follows:

> "A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shock, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base" (Krantz, 2001, p.18.)

This definition had been found to be too narrow because they focused only on certain aspects or manifestations of poverty, such as low income, or did not consider other vital aspects of poverty such as vulnerability and social exclusion (Krantz, 2001).

In response to conflicts, the recovery from stresses and shocks in order to maintain or enhance the capabilities to secure livelihoods of Malay Muslim women in the Deep South of Thailand will be a core part of the researcher's investigation on role and livelihoods. Generally, women and men have different resources available to them and they will turn to different strategies for survival. In general, individuals with a greater access to resources and better mobility will have a wider variety of options. (Initiative) Therefore, in order to deal with women's vulnerability in the conflict, the livelihood aspect of coping with shock, which has been derived from violent conflicts, will be the primary concern.

2.3 The Conflict in the Deep South of Thailand

The Deep South of Thailand experienced a decade-long history of fighting between the separatists and Thai authorities. McCargo (2008) sees the Southern Thai conflict as failure of the Thai authority to integrate Malay-Muslims into the Thai society. However, some scholars take the position that the national Thai identity has been successfully created based on the state's imposing on the Thai population the harmonizing policy of the Thai language, and the assimilation of social and cultural differences between the Buddhist Thais and the Muslim Thais (Yusuf & Atilgan, 2008). Since January 4, 2004 the conflict has sharply increased after a gun robbery incidence which occurred in an army camp in Narathiwat province. It marked

the reemergence of an insurgency during that time. The government forces responded by committing serious and widespread human-rights abuses against suspected militants and their supporters. People were shot to death by the military. However, a common but troubling reading of the Southern Thai conflict uses the troops of "Islamic violence" and the global "war on terror" to frame the violence within a larger notion of the clash of civilization between Islam and the West (McCargo, 2008). Whereas Apichai Sunchindah describes that the escalation of the conflicts and violence in the Deep South of Thailand has been caused by conflict of identity among citizens of the Thai Kingdom as well as its neighboring countries in Southeast Asia (Sunchindah, 2005). Under the scene of unprecedented violence and brutality, the army and the police have not pursued criminal prosecutions of their forces because the military law has been imposed (Watch, 2007).

The state of emergency was spurring the climate of fear in the three southern provinces. Relations between officials and Malay Muslim villagers were at an unprecedented low. Martial law was declared in January 2004 in response to an intentional insurgency attack. As a result, the use of military law led to serious abuses by security forces, notably the bloody suppression of the Tak Bai protest in October 2004, and it confirmed once again the Malays' historical grievances stemming from decades of discrimination and attempts towards forced assimilation by the Thai state (*International Crisis Group,* 2005).

According to the work "Role and challenges for Muslim women in the restive Southern border provinces of Thailand", the conflict in the Southernmost provinces of Thailand has been regarded as a revenge of Thai Muslim civilians on the Thai armed forces (Neelapaijit, 2009). Moreover, Angkhana found that there was usually a group of villagers arming themselves with knives and woods in order to fight against Thai officers due to the government's brutal operations in response to Southern violent incidences. Similarly, Human Rights Watch found that there were random attacks on civilians, such as assassinations of civilian officials or schoolteachers, bombings aimed at crowded markets or other civilian locations such as commercial banks, restaurants, department stores, or hotels. Separatist militants have also been responsible for numerous indiscriminate attacks (Watch, 2007).

2.4 Gender Role of Malay Muslim Women in the Deep South of Thailand

A literature of feminist sociologist found that "gender organizes our sense of self, it is a set of expectations we encounter and must deal with in our daily interactions, and is a form of social organization shaping opportunities and constraints (Sprague, 2001)[3] . Basow (1992; cited in Naivinit, 2010)[4] provided the definition of gender in society as an evaluation of behavior. Masculine and feminine behaviors have been addressed in order to differentiate a degree of masculinity and femininity. Moser (1993) has suggested three roles of women. First, the reproductive role, which is required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labor force. It comprises of childbearing and rearing responsibilities. Secondly, the productive work which can often be seen as a secondary source of income generation. In rural areas, it normally takes the form of agricultural work whereas in urban areas women usually work in the informal sector. Lastly, community management work is one of women's tasks. Women frequently undertake community managing work and preparing common items at any community events (Moser, 1993).

Gender roles are considered both traditions and norms of people in society. It simply present typical social roles of men and women, either domestic sphere or public sphere (Naivinit, 2010). However, gender roles are held at a certain period of time and it is able to be changed with every important transformation of society (Grint and Gill, 1995 as cited in Naivinit, 2010).

Women and men are able to take on an active participant role during a conflict; however, women's roles are unstable since they have taken unaccustomed roles which were previously filled by men. Tilman Brück and Kati Schindler (2007), authors of a study on the impacts of conflict at the household level, point out that conflicts lead to widowhoods of people. Some women who have lost their husbands are more likely to remarry quickly in order to protect their livelihoods., Nonetheless, here are many war widows who decide to be single heads of households and who encounter particular obstacles as a consequence of their marital status and gender (Brück & Schindler, 2007). Similarly, a recent report in the Bangkok Post stated that there are 2,700 registered war widows in the Deep South of Thailand. Countless wives,

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[3] Sprague, J. (2001). Gender and Feminist Studies in Sociology International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences (pp. 5942-5948).
[4] Naivinit, S. (2010). *Gender, access to community telecenter and livelihoods asset changes.* Asian Institute of Technology Pathumthani.

sisters and daughters have been pushed into the role of being the breadwinners of their families after the men were detained or fled to avoid the arrest ("War widows bear heavy burden ", 2014). Angkhana Neelapaijit (2009) showed that a number of Malay Muslim women in the Deep South of Thailand took a very important role in taking care of their family members. Interestingly, after the loss of their husbands in conflicts, Malay Muslim women received unaccustomed status as heads of the households.

The widely acknowledged role of Malay Muslim women complied with their Islamic religion and culture. It is generally known that in Islam women are considered secondary and inferior to their male counterparts. Men are charged with the religious responsibility of protecting and taking care of women in every way—her basic needs, her life, morality and chastity, and therefore a Muslim wife must be obedient and should not commit any action which questions her Muslim husband's authority (Othman, 2006). Therefore, after the loss of men as breadwinners in a situation of conflict, Muslim women unavoidably face challenges in certain ways concerning their survival..

Angkhana (2009) provides a broad notion of the typical role of Malay Muslim women in the Deep South of Thailand and also draws a great attention to women facing constraints during the long-term absence of their husbands.. According to Angkhana (2009), Malay Muslim women are expected to take care of family members and are also supposed to satisfy the needs of their husbands. In addition, Malay Muslim women become their families' breadwinners while they deal with religion and social norms and customs. Although there have been attempts to investigate Malay Muslim women's role in general, the research on changes of roles of Malay Muslim women has not been adequately discussed in the published literature.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

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                        ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
                        │          Gender Norm / Role          │
                        └─────────────────────────────────────┘

              ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
              │     Conflict     │      │    Insecurity    │
              └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘

  ┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐
  │  Socio-economic  │   │  Loss of Male    │   │ Personal security│
  │                  │   │ breadwinner      │   │    / Safety      │
  │                  │   │ /Impact on       │   │                  │
  │                  │   │ Household        │   │                  │
  └──────────────────┘   └──────────────────┘   └──────────────────┘

                        ┌──────────────────┐
                        │  Muslim women =  │
                        │ Heads of Household│
                        └──────────────────┘

                        ┌──────────────────┐
                        │ Coping strategy  │
                        │ for securing     │
                        │ livelihoods      │
                        └──────────────────┘

                        ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
                        │      Shifting of Gender Norm / Role  │
                        └─────────────────────────────────────┘
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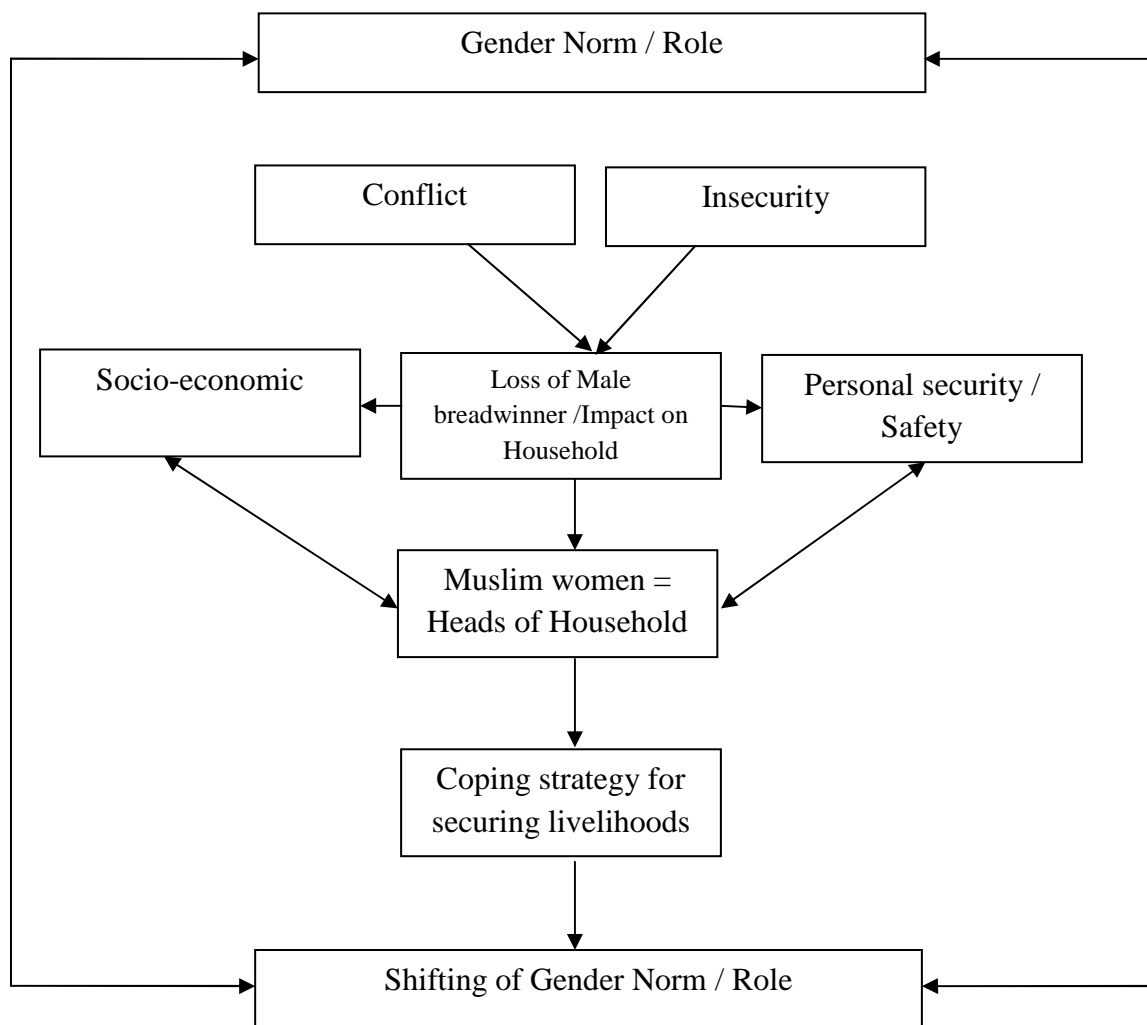
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. Research Methodology

According to the objectives of this study and research questions, a qualitative methodology is considered to be applied to this research. The study can be categorized by purpose of the study as exploratory research. In-depth interviews, key informants interviews and observation are considered as data collection techniques. It requires intensive communication, interpretation, and observation. Moreover, qualitative analysis involves content analysis and emphasizes comprehension of the case study (Bernard, 2011). Therefore, primary and secondary data collections are also included. Secondary data collection will provide comprehensive understanding on gender role changes of Muslim women who have been affected by the violent conflict.

3.1 Data Collection

- **Collection of Secondary Data**

The secondary data were collected from various sources such as books, journals, newspapers, websites, and research papers.

- **Collection of Primary Data**

Primary data and information were collected by using different research methods such as observations, in-depth interviews and key informants interviews. Local NGO-workers and government officers were considered as key-informants. Moreover, qualitative interviews were well suited for the purpose of learning about people's experiences and understanding people in different situations. As a result, the researcher decided to use a semi-structured interview guideline as a tool for gathering people's testimonies.

- **Data Saturation**

Data saturation is frequently mentioned in qualitative research. However, the use of saturation within methods varies (Nixon & Wild). For instance, ethnography and ethno science are based on samples between 30-60 interviews. Grounded theory methodology comprises of around 30-50 interviews and phenomenology of 5 to 25 (Mason, 2010). However, the saturation is regularly archived within 10 individual interviews, with some evidence that can be achieved with fewer focus groups (Nixon & Wild).

More data may not necessarily lead to more information and qualitative research is very labor intensive (Mason, 2010). Therefore, the researcher will decide to stop the process of interviewing when the researcher has found the same pattern of answers. However, the researcher remains faithful to the principles of qualitative research and the number of respondents in these qualitative studies were generally followed the concept of saturation.

3.2 Method and Technique of Data Analysis

In order to get a sufficient number of informants, purposive sampling technique is applied to the study.

The study will be based on qualitative methodology and primary data collection will be collected by the researcher.

- **Sample**

The study will conduct interviews with 28 informants comprising both in-depth interviews and interviews with key informants.

- 22 In-depth interviews were conducted with informants who can be categorized into two groups. Firstly, Muslim women who have been affected by the conflict lost their husbands and become single heads of households. Secondly, Muslim women who have been affected by the conflict and whose husbands were detained in jail for at least one year under the emergency decree or military law, therefore leading them to becoming single heads of households. All the interviewees will be derived from the local NGOs or CBOs like Duay Jai group (the Heart Support group) and Peaun Jumlei (Friends of Defendants group).
- 6 Key informant interviews with local NGOs, which are operating activities in the study-area. Government officers who provide livelihood support to vulnerable women will also be key informants of the study.

Information will be collected by using an unstructured questionnaire in order to enable the informant to express life experience freely. Unstructured interviews can be very useful in studies which seek and use information on people who live under certain circumstances. They are especially useful for studies attempting to find patterns, generate models, and inform information system design and implementation. After collection of data, all information will be compiled and analyzed by using the qualitative analytical approach. Content analysis is considered an important tool for the analysis of this paper. Observations, site visits, key informant interviews and key information will be used in a qualitative analysis in order to explore   changes of the gender role among Muslim women who have been affected by the violent conflict. Conversely, the losses of livelihoods of Muslim women will allow for a better understanding of people who have lived with violent conflicts.

3.3 Selection of the Study Area

Although the Deep South of Thailand consists of three Provinces (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) and four districts of Songkhla province, Pattani province is the only selected area for the current field-research due to the security condition in this particular area. Moreover, the study will rely on cases provided by local NGOs or CBOs in that area; for instance, DuayJai group (Heart Support group) and Peaun Jumlei (Friends of the Defendants). Furthermore, most government agencies are located in this area and this will provide more opportunities and convenience when contacting local people (women). In addition, during the researcher's previous work as research assistant in the last two years, the researcher had the opportunity to visit and become familiar with this particular area.

4. Results and Discussion

The violent conflict poses serious challenges to the local people, undermining the idea of social and cultural harmony in the country. Persistent conflict largely spurred insecure circumstance for the civilians. Both Buddhist and Muslim Thais were at risk. Daily attacks on civilians can commonly be observed. This led to a large number of people affected by the violent conflicts. Therefore, Muslim women as single heads of the households were selected to be respondents for this study. They comprised two groups of Muslim female breadwinners. First, they were the families whose male breadwinners died from the conflict. Secondly, they were the families whose male breadwinners were jailed under the martial law. However, there are limitations on accessing data of the detainee's families. The confidentiality of the family is a primary concern of the researcher. Some of the respondents are not comfortable to reveal their identity since in their case criminal charges are still pending. Therefore, the researcher relied on local NGOs for providing suitable cases for research.. Resulted, the female breadwinners of detainees' families will include first, female who remain leaders of their families. Second, female who no longer lead their families since their husbands have been released.
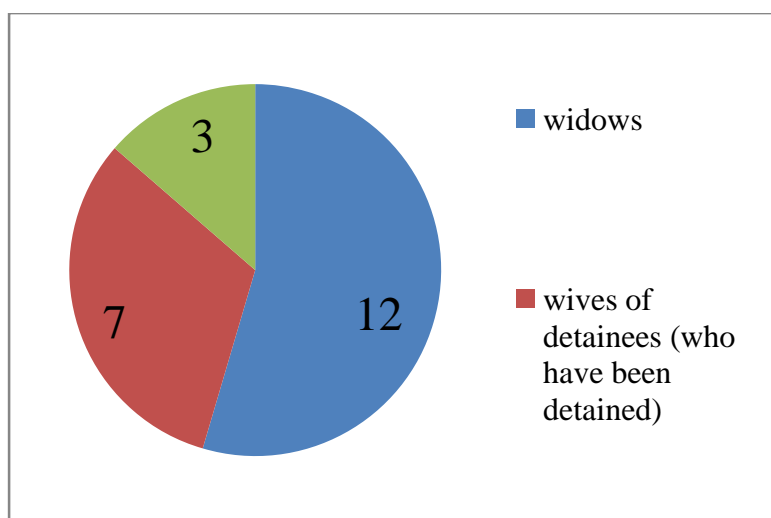
Figure 2: Number of the respondents

Table 2: Profile of the Respondents

No.	Marital status : Widows	Age	No. of children	Current Occupation
Female Heads of Households				
1	Ms. A	*	4	Daily wage laborer / Temporary Staff at Tambon Administrative Office / Head of self-help group (Make Chilli Paste)
2	Ms. B	54	1	Fish cracker seller, Member of a self-help group (Make Chilli Paste)
3	Ms. C	52	6	Temporary Staff at a local primary school / Member of a self-help group (Make Chilli Paste)
4	Ms. D	34	No child	Daily wage laborer (Babysitting)
5	Ms. E	39	2	Daily wage laborer (sewing local handicrafts) / Agriculture (Vegetable)
6	Ms. F	44	4	Daily wage laborer (sewing local handicrafts)
7	Ms. G	47	9	Street vendor at street market (curry paste seller)

No.		Age	No. of children	Current Occupation
8	Ms. H	43	3	Temporary staff at a local primary school
9	Ms. I	40	5	Rubber Tapper/Bakery Seller
10	Ms. J	48	2	Bakery Seller
11	Ms. K	42	2	Shopkeeper
12	Ms. L	43	5	Temporary Staff at Royal family's project (Hydroponic Farm) / Daily wage laborer (screening fish)
No.	**Marital status : wives of detainees (detained)**	**Age**	**No. of children**	**Current Occupation**
13	Ms. M	25	1	Daily wages labor (screening fish)
14	Ms. N	29	1	Daily wages labor (rubber tapper)
15	Ms. O		no child	Shopkeeper (Papaya salad)
16	Ms. P	41	5	Shopkeeper (grocery) /Bakery seller
17	Ms. Q	28	no child	Daily wages labor (rubber tapper)
18	Ms. R	26	1	Peanuts seller at street market
19	Ms. S	*	1	Nurse at Pattani Hospital
No.	**Marital status : Wife of Detainees (released)**	**Age**	**No. of children**	**Current Occupation**
20	Ms. T	38	1	Shopkeeper (Veil/ Muslim women costume)
21	Ms. U	31	2	Daily wages labor (rubber tapper) / Agriculture (Cassava)
22	Ms. V	30	1	Daily wages labor (rubber tapper)

* Missing age information caused by researcher

The results will initially present the role and responsibility of Muslim women who become single head of a household when their partners are jailed or killed in the conflict-prone context of Thailand's Deep South. The women agency can best be understood as an extension of the larger responsibility of Muslim women in a non-domestic sphere. This will also help to explain the women's traditional role within domestic and public sphere.

As Muslim women, they are expected to perform as obedient daughter, dutiful wife and good mother who will fulfill the role model for the children. However, Muslim women acting as a breadwinner implicitly violate traditional Muslim female gender norms. According to Ryoko Nishii, the traditional role of Muslim women is defined by her status in the household. She also stated that the most obvious boundaries describing gender concern those of the house (Nishiii, 1999).

4.1 Traditional Gender Role of Muslim Women

With regards to the respondents' testimonials, their main responsibilities are mainly to take care of housework. This idea is a commitment to the religious belief, which states, for instance, that teaching the children to be good Muslims increases families' harmony and means to take good care of the husband. Muslim women in Pattani Province strictly followed religious traditions. They were satisfied with their present roles according to the concept of Islamic Religion.

> "We (Muslim women) normally have to take care of every task of household chores. This responsibility has been imposed by the Quran" (Interview, Ms. K., 42 years old)

Ms. K is a Buddhist Thai woman who converted to Islam, following her husband's faith. She studied the Islamic religion after being married in 1998, and she also strictly follows Islamic traditions. Her head is completely covered with hijab with only her eyes being unveiled. However, this way of wearing a hijab is rarely found in the province.

> "I like to do housework since I have no experience doing other jobs. Although sometimes it makes me feel fatigue… it is common for housework" (Interview, Ms. M., 25 years)

As the above-mentioned case demonstrates, for Muslim women, the religious institution plays a crucial role at the family level. It determines women's role and status within society. As this respondent's answer clearly shows, being a good Muslim woman means staying at home and taking good care of the husband, children and housework. In order to ensure women's conformity as demanded by the Muslim female gender norms, traditional gender

roles have been justified on the basis of religious affiliation which offers guidance on the role and responsibility of women.

However, daily practices are also important. It is simply not possible to state that only religions dictate people's behaviors, because local cultures and norms also play an important role in influencing people's practices.

> "I will do the cleaning after I come back from the rubber field but for washing clothes, I always ask him (husband) to help me because I don't like to wash clothes. It is too heavy for me to do it alone. He also helps me (with this chore) every time," Interview Ms. Q (28 years old)

Ms. Q takes care of both housework and non-domestic chores after her paid work in the rubber fields. This situation might lead to a 'double burden' on the woman; however, her husband is able to relieve some of her duties since they stay together. It is important to acknowledge that the prescribed female Muslim gender roles have possibly been changed because of the recent practices in reality life of women. It can be best understood by daily practices of Muslim women in the province. Many of the respondents' testimonials show that there was no tension between the religious life and the secular world of Muslim women.

> "I normally stay at home but I sometimes go shopping with my husband, he always accompanies me and if I have to go somewhere else by myself, I will inform him about my travel. If he doesn't want me to go, I won't go. That is not a problem. However, mostly if he doesn't want me to go, he would always say 'Ok, I will accompany you.'" Interview, Ms. N (29 years old)

Ms. N is also wearing hijab which covers the entire face with only the eyes unveiled. Like Muslim women in general, she usually stays at home and looks after her husband and her son, while also doing housework. She will not go out without her husband's permission. Traditional gender roles of Muslim women can be seen as a result of the religious tradition, which is imposed on women by the religious belief. Muslim women were more likely to follow their religious obligations than men (Nishiii, 1999). According to religious norms and traditions, women were able to reconcile with the religious practices of the secular world. However, the traditional gender role of Muslim women has changed, since the conflict has

led to a number of Muslim female having to become household breadwinners and to replace their missing male counterparts.

4.2 Female Breadwinners Entering Non-Traditional Roles

Generally, Muslim men drastically dominate the statistics of violence. It is important to note that men generally are associated with being both actors and victims of violence within the context of war and conflict. Men were targeted for their potential role as military combatants, whereas women were targeted for the social reproductive role as supporters of the militants.. For instance, women were responsible for taking care of children and the elderly, and also housework. On the one hand, a study on a discourse analysis of Men's vulnerability in Thailand's Deep South shows that militarization by the state often affects men disproportionally. On the other hand, gender-selective repression' has also been found. However, in terms of insecurity issues, it was associated with gendered terms**,** caused by the fact that special security laws affected men and women differently, however, the number of male victims was more dominant (Nilsson, 2012).

> "My life totally changed, my family life also changed, once my husband was not around I knew that now I have to be both male and female [mother and father]…My life is no longer the same." Interview, Ms. I (40 years old)

Since women become breadwinners of the families they feel differently and realize that their role has now been changed. Women have been forced to enter non-traditional roles as family breadwinners since their male partners were no longer present.

> "I decided to continue to work in the rubber fields, because there is no other choice if I stop working no one will take care of my children. Right now the family has only me." Interview, Ms. Q (28 years old)

Since the conflict has been on-going in society, the traditional role of Muslim women has also been distorted. The breadwinner role, traditionally belonging to men, was replaced by women. Women have been forced to enter the non-traditional role since their male breadwinners were no longer present.

4.2.1 Gender, Coping Strategies for Entering Non-Traditional Role

Gender roles of the Muslims profoundly adhere to Islam which men and women were strongly encouraged to follow. Besides, the gender roles essentially refer to the set of attitudes and behaviors with regards to the sex identity. As the expression of respondents we have discussed above, it was clearly acknowledged that traditional gender role has been exacerbated, since Muslim women no longer behave or perform their traditional gender role.

The previous argument has drawn on Muslim female's traditional role. Initially, women were not supposed to work as breadwinners for the families; however, with regards to the conditions in the household unit, female breadwinners were eventually accepted. Although traditional roles of women have been perpetuated by religious beliefs but it was easily accepted to be changed or to be reinterpreted. Entering the realm of unaccustomed societal role for Muslim women led to new dynamics of gender relations. Coping strategies of Muslim female breadwinners were uncovered by the respondent's testimony.

> "I came back to stay with my mother. There is also my sister who takes care of me. My sister also assisted me in following up on my husband's case at the court….I had to rely on my sister because at that time I got pregnant with my first child and I was not able to do any job. Thus, I thought staying with my mother would be better." Interview, Ms. T (38 years old)

Ms. T's younger sister became an activist after she got involved in assisting her brother during the legal procedures following his detention. She then began to legally assist other detainees' families with regards to enforcement of the special law in the Deep South of Thailand. In the meantime, Ms. T's husband was released and he stays now with Ms. T's family instead of his own family due to the general security conditions.

> "I moved to stay with my mother in order to leave my children with her, and then I was able to work without worrying about my children." (Interview, Ms. C., 52 years old)

Ms. C. became a breadwinner, after her husband died. However, she cannot stay at her husband's house since the property was owned by the first wife of her husband. Thus, her step-son would take the house and she had to move out accordingly.

The above quotation illustrates that women's role has been shifted. By examining the women's involvement in housework, it appeared that they were less occupied with housework and had more opportunities to work outside the family home. In that context, the gender discourse in Islamic community has been altered after Muslim women were forced to enter the unaccustomed role as breadwinner. The above expression of female breadwinner can be best understood by employing the gender aspects. The implication of Muslim women entering into a non-traditional role has both positive and negative consequences.

It simply means that although Muslim women entered a non-traditional gender role, they continued to perform a traditional role of women.. Hence, women themselves knew that the disappearance of male breadwinners in their households would lead them to unintended difficulties. Insecurity of their livelihoods was primarily seen as a threat for their families and in order to reduce the unintended threat, women were forced to enter the unaccustomed role as household breadwinners. However, statements of the respondents are used to characterize the coping strategies of Muslim female breadwinners. Therefore, I would like to emphasize that Muslim female breadwinners tend to rely on their matrilineal relatives like mother, sister or their female siblings. This situation might lead to a double burden of other females being responsible for their own family and families of their relatives. This double burden continues to exist today.

The statements by women imply that Muslim female not only have a hard time adjusting themselves to a non-traditional gender role but they have also encountered new constraints when securing family's livelihoods, because they had to take sole responsibility for the family on their shoulders.. The discussion will continue in the next part.

4.3 Changes of Livelihoods

Taking on the role as the sole breadwinner of the family forced the respondents to work outside their homes. It is apparent that there is no longer only the housework to take care of, but that the women have to find other job opportunities which will increase their income in response to the higher risk of household's shortage of income. Interestingly, most of the respondents changed jobs several times after the male breadwinners were no longer around. Financial considerations seem to be the main factor leading to the change of jobs.

"After the death of my husband, I just started to learn how to bake."
(Interview, Ms.J., 48 years old)

Ms. J. was a housewife and her husband was an Islamic leader who usually earned regular income. Therefore, she stayed at home, looked after her children and did housework. Since her husband was no longer around, she had to learn new skills in order to find a job.

"Since I was married, I worked at home and took care of household chores, such as cooking, cleaning and raising my children. We travelled sometimes and went for example to Hadyai but after my husband died, I had to work. Selling som-tam at the weekend market was my first job after my husband was not around anymore." (Interview, Ms. A., 40 years old)

"After my husband got shot dead, I have to work outside the family home. I sought whatever job was available to me because I had to look after my children. In the   beginning I had no idea which job I could take on, because there were limited job-opportunities in my community. Later, I got a job at a restaurant downtown. I had to take a bus at 5 am in the morning and leave the shop by 4 pm in order to catch the last bus to go back home on time…even if it was so exhausting every day, I had to do it, because I didn't even know how to ride a motorcycle." (Interview, Ms. C., 52 years old)

With regards to the respondent's testimony, it can be said that Muslim women were more associated with domestic work, which corresponds to the notion of the traditional gender role of Muslim women in particular. Therefore, these women seek to find new jobs and to gain more access to the public sphere previously occupied by men.

However, I would like to emphasize that although Muslim women, who have been affected by violent conflicts, might gain more experience in the public, they still have less dependency for example, decision making and intra-household economic. It is because they have been adhered to their parents. Some of them receive financial support from their parents even after their marriages, as has been discussed earlier. This leads to changes in their livelihood pattern which will be discussed in the following section.

4.3.1 Gender Stereotype of Work

To begin with, the important characteristic of Muslim women's livelihoods in certain areas is their easy entering non-agriculture work, even though they mostly end up with gender stereotype of work. On the one hand, Muslim women tend to be involved in non-agriculture work which becomes their primary consideration. The findings of this study show that, most of the respondents were initially involved in non-agriculture work soon after they became family breadwinners. Some of the respondents continued to work on the rubber field (agriculture sector); however, they were prone to find daily-wage jobs which create other kinds of constraints to women.

> "Initially, I worked in a rubber field but since I gained more responsibility, I felt being forced to earn a higher income. Therefore, I applied for work at a project funded by one of the Royal Foundations. I wanted to earn a regular income since I have so many expenses." (Interview Ms. L.,43 years old.)

Ms. L.'s case is very interesting: after her husband was shot dead, she had to take care of her children alone. Several years after her husband's incident, her first daughter got married and moved out of the family house. Mrs. L. was able to maintain the family livelihood by earning money from a single job. However, soon after, her brother-in-law was arrested on the charge of being a supporter of the separatist group, her first daughter came back to live with her again, thus, she then started to work more than one job. Nowadays, she is a temporary staff of a Royal Foundation project as a rubber tapper. Additionally, she earns more income by screening small fish from the nearby pier.

> "Sewing handicraft products is my only job right now. I have no rubber field to work on; I just have a small area around my house. I am growing vegetables but not that much, just a few herbal ingredients" (Interview, Ms. E., 43 years old)

> "I joined a sewing group several times and now I continue to do it as my work at home. The earning is not much but at least I have work to do" (Interview, Ms. F., 44 years old)

Ms. E. and Ms. F. live in the same community and after the loss of their husbands who were the breadwinners of their families, they are searching for jobs, and sewing is their preference since there is a limited choice of jobs available to them in their communities. Sewing can be seen as an occupation for typical women.

By examining Muslim women's work, the outcome of the research shows that women struggled to improve financial conditions of their families. However, fewer technical skills and less experience in the public domain, compared to their male counterparts, continuously exacerbated women's problem and their freedom to find decent works. For instance, most of the respondents end up with works regarded as typical for women such as cooking, caring job and some kind of nimble finger (elaborate type of work; researcher). Women might generate enough money for securing their life eventually, but there is little support to enable them to take on a non typical female job. Finally, by assuming the role of the family's breadwinner, it does not guarantee that Muslim women will gain a higher position in society.

4.3.2 Burdens

In turn, becoming the main breadwinner of a family requires a non-domestic skill-set especially when it comes to finding a job. Muslim women were also most present as the leaders of households with regards to religious beliefs. When they were taking on an unaccustomed role, the most important thing is adjusting themselves to the new circumstances.

> "I spent the whole day baking; you know it was not easy. I have to calculate all the capital that I have, expected profit that I want to earn and I also have to pay close attention to the raw material prices. It is good that we have been assisted by the ICRC but I am still poor at calculation and financial skills. So, I am still doing bakery at a small scale. A profit of 400-500 baht/time of baking is fine for me. I don't want to increase the number of my goods. (Interview, Ms. I., 40 years old)

From the research findings, it is obvious that Muslim women have been looking for possible financial support by seeking secure jobs. With regards to a local activist and researcher also

pointed out that a regular income is an important reference to secure job in respondent's point of view.

> "I have also learned how to start a grocery shop with the help of the ICRC…Even if it was difficult, I would like to have a small shop of my own because my brother-in-law already has a stall in front of his house. I just put some of my products there and I will get a small amount of profit without paying the rental cost. Sometimes, I go out and hawk around the village in order to sell my bakery products." (Interview, Ms. P., 41 years old)

According to the statements above, respondents have to learn new skill-sets, such as financial and management skills which can become burdens to unaccustomed tasks. The findings show that securing the family's livelihoods made it necessary to work outside the family home despite it clashing with traditional gender roles. However, the respondents' cases were exceptional from the general society.

5. Conclusions and Recommendation

In the Deep South of Thailand, Muslims in Pattani (and also in Yala, and Narathiwat), differ from Muslims in other regions of the country. Language and historical evidence of Pattani were closer to the Malay ethnicity than to the Thais. The most important feature of Pattani is the religious tradition which plays a crucial role in determining the traditional gender role of the Muslim people. The influence of religious beliefs makes the gender roles of Islamic followers clearly visible and profoundly impacts upon them in their daily life. Generally, Muslim women were more likely to follow religious obligations than men (Nishiii, 1999).

5.1 Conclusion

Traditional gender roles of Muslim people in Pattani have been reinforced by local practices or local tradition. Therefore, Muslims have to maintain the idea of religion by practicing every day precisely what the religious texts prescribe. For Muslim women, it is apparent that they are expected to perform their gender roles with regards to the religious beliefs. Being dutiful wives and daughters may be ideal roles of Muslim women. Also, being a role model for children is also an important image for Muslim women to uphold.

Traditionally, Muslim women do not have a family leading role; however, since the violent conflicts occurred in a certain area of Thailand, female breadwinners could be commonly found in some Southern provinces. Some have lost their husbands in deadly incidents, while others have to survive by themselves after their husbands have been jailed.

Female breadwinners were widely accepted in society after the political conflict has led to unconventional circumstances. For example, Muslim males would like to accompany their female partners when they have to travel, for their safety. Therefore, entering an unaccustomed role of Muslim women led to the new dynamics of gender relations. They have to adjust themselves to new roles and new responsibilities. Generating and maintaining an income are the main focus when securing their livelihoods; however, because of limited skills and their lack of experiences of involvement in the public sphere, which until recently was male dominated, to some extent women's vulnerability has increased.

The respondents' testimonies reveal that staying with parents and asking for assistance from their matrilineal relatives such as mother, sister or their female siblings can be seen as Muslim women's coping strategies. However, in terms of securing their livelihoods, Muslim women are facing several constraints. For instance, limited skills non-domestic work makes them end up with only low paid jobs available to those women with little or no skills such as daily wage laborers. Although they are able to learn new skills with regards to other lines of work, such as financial or administrative works. However, new burdens are created for those women who have to take care of both domestic and non-domestic works. By employing the gender perspective therefore, caring work and nimble finger work are more likely to be reinforced in the contemporary period of Pattani women due to their unaccustomed new role goes against the typical gender roles of Muslim women in Pattani.

From the research findings, it is obvious that although Muslim women entered non-traditional gender roles, they have to continue to perform the traditional roles of Muslim women. Some female breadwinners push their burden from work further to their matrilineal relatives while they have to learn new skills in order to secure the livelihoods of their families.

5.2 Suggestions and Recommendations

Although the findings did not indicate that religious aspects prevent Muslim women from managing inheritance matters, the results of the study clarify the roles, conditions, problems and obstacles of Muslim women in this violent conflict. Coping strategies of Muslim women with unaccustomed new roles and the negotiation strategies within the public domain, which are conventionally dominated by males, are also uncovered. This also proves that these women still perform traditional gender roles while entering non-traditional gender roles simultaneously.

Vulnerable group of women in the study demonstrated that they were performing economic roles both inside and outside the family homes, in order to secure the livelihoods of vulnerable Muslim women in certain areas. Therefore, some points concerning the development of Muslim women in Pattani can be summed up as follows:

1. The study found that Muslim women who have been affected by the violent conflict have tried to adjust themselves to unaccustomed roles; however, there are several constraints in the society which obstructed them. Therefore, intervention should be made in order to redefine role and responsibility of those who become more vulnerable.

2. Non-formal education (especially vocational training) should be promoted in the area in order to assist those who want to learn new skills for better paid jobs. This will enable vulnerable groups of people to have more options of securing their livelihoods in order to improve the economic conditions of Muslim women in Southern Thailand.

To conclude, when women were poisoning within society, they were restrictedly regulated by religion without adequate understanding on gender basis and how patriarchal system were sustained and reconfigure throughout the daily practices of people. But Connell (2002,; cited in Fakthong,2011) challenged the oriented – knowledge on gender relations since she had emphasized the feasibility of change in gender roles and its result to women who were able to gain more power in negotiation through the changing role. However, Connell also exemplified that Changed roles did not affect to gender relation entirely due to the other element of gender relations are even reinforced in certain circumstance.

In Pattani, female breadwinners have been influenced local culture in which religion is central focus of this ideology. However, in the reality, female breadwinner also confronted with unprecedented circumstance which has been provided by absence of male breadwinner and insecure situation. Therefore, degree of religion engagement was undermined whereas female breadwinner gradually situated themselves in society. Therefore, the study thus suggests that change has to occur both in local culture domain and social domain concurrently for significant and meaningful change to take place and provide alternatives to traditional norm that continue to marginalize women.

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Appendix

Guideline Questionnaires
I. Respondent Profile
1.   Name:
2.   Sex:
3.   Age;
4.   Education level:
5.   No of Children:
6.   Education level of children:
7.   Occupation of recent main breadwinner:

Part I: Before becoming a single head of a household

General Information: Muslim Women (idea of Muslim women)
1.   What do you know about Muslim women's practice (womanhood) with regards to/regarding Islamic religion?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
2. What does a woman do with regard to their daughter(s)?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
3. What does a woman do with regard to be a wife?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
4. From where did you learn about the 'idea of Muslim women'?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
5. What are your main responsibilities after being married?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
6. Who makes decisions with regards to family matters?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
7. When you have a family problem, what did you do in order to solve the problem?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
8. Have you ever consulted your husband in order to solve those problems?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
        - If yes, what is that issue?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...

9. Did you ever freely make a decision concerning family's issues while you stayed with your husband?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
        - If yes, what else can you decide by yourself?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
10. Have you ever asked for help from your parents for solving your family's problems?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
        - If yes, in what way/what kind of help did you ask for?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
11. Are you able to participate in community work?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
        - If yes, what did you do?

…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- How often?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
12. Do you have to ask for permission from your husband/parents to participate in community work?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- If yes, what else do you have to ask for the permission?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
13. Were you able to travel freely in the province once your husband was around? (such as to visit friends, to go to the mosque, to go to the market etc.)
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- If you were not able to, why?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- What did you do in case you have no chance to move around freely?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- Does that lead to stress/ tension in the family or any other problems?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...

Economic situation

14. What is your main source of income until recently? Is that comparable to the income you earned in previous jobs during the time when your husband was with you?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
15. Who is the main person who generates income for the family?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- If only a man, why did he take this responsibility?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
16. Do you face any financial problems?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- If yes, what are those problems?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- What did you do to overcome those problems?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...

Part II: After becoming a single head of the household

17. How many years ago did your husband die or got detained?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
18. How do you feel when you are the main breadwinner of the family?
…………………………………………………………………………………………..
19. How do you feel when you compare the status of being 'the breadwinner' with previous status as a 'wife'?
…………………………………………………………………………………………..
20. Who takes care of the housework?
…………………………………………………………………………………………..
- If the woman takes that responsibility does it lead to stress/tension?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
- If yes, how do you manage to overcome that?
…………………………………………………………………………………………...
21. Have you ever faced any problems with regards to the unaccustomed status in your family?
(such as with son, daughter, your spouse's parents or mother and father-in-law etc)

……………………………………………………………………………………………………..
        - If yes, what are the problems? / why?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………...

        - How did you overcome the problems?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

22. Have you ever faced any problems with regards to the unaccustomed status in community?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        - If yes, what are they? / why?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………...

        - How did you overcome the problems?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

23. How about your free movement, is that possible?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        -If not, why is it impossible?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        - How did you overcome the problem?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

24. Are you able to participate in community works?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        - If not, why
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        - How did you deal with it?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        -If yes, what are the community works you participated in?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

25. Does the recent main source of income suffice with family expense?
        -If yes, why do you feel it is adequate for family?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        -If not, how do you deal with it?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

26. Have you received financial support from the government?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        -If yes, could you please share with us the rough amount?
………………………………………………………………………………………………….…

        - How do you manage the spending money?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

27. Are you free to allocate the money? And How?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        -If not, why?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

28. Do you have any social spending? (Such as donation, religious expense) ?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

29. Do you want to find new jobs/ new source of income?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

        -If yes, what type / kind of jobs? And why you choose that?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

-If no, why don't you want to find?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

30. Are you able to find new jobs in this area?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      - If not, why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

31. How do you deal with domestic work?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

32. Is domestic work heavy for you?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Part III. Security: Capability; Socio-Economic Security

33. Do you participate in vocational training?

      - If yes, what are the trainings you have participated?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      -If not, why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

34. Do you participate in government development projects?

      - If yes, what are the projects?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      -If not, why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

35. Do you participate in any self-help group?

      - If yes, what groups are they? And why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      -If not, why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

36. How do you feel about an on-going conflict?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

37. Do you want any special support from the government/ or any development agency?

      - If yes, what type of support do you need? From whom and why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      -If not, why do you not want any support?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

38. Do you have any challenges in your life/ family? [Challenges mean e.g. obstacle for earning, problem of children etc.]

      - If yes, what are they? And why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      -If not, why do you feel, there is no challenge for you?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

40. Do you have any future plan for yourself / family?

      - If yes, what are they?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

      -If not, why?

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Key Informant: Guideline Questionnaire

1. What are the challenges of your work with regards to violent conflicts?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

2. How does the conflict particularly affect the livelihoods of the people, both male and female, with regards to your personal experience in fieldwork?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

3. What are the challenges of women in this particular area?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

4. Do you find any specific challenges faced by female breadwinners in taking care of family matters?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

5. Do you find any specific challenges faced by female breadwinners in the community work?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

6. With regards to the availability of jobs or job diversification, do you find any limitations or challenges faced by the local people both male and female?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

7. What kind of special support is provided by development agencies (ICRC/Local NGOs/Government)?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

8. Do you have any future plan for the project?
How does importance of livelihoods support women?
……………………………………………………………………………………..

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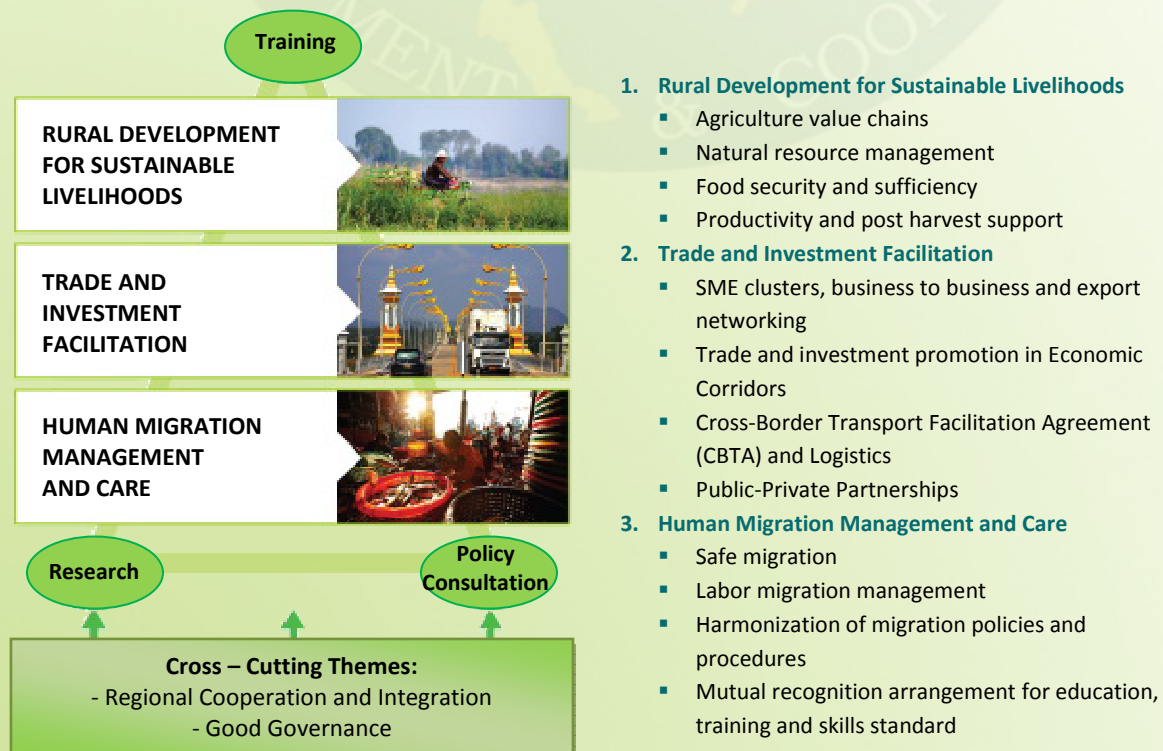
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