

The 8th Conference of East Asia Research Association for
Agricultural Heritage Systems (ERAHS)

August 7th-9th 2024 Gifu Prefecture, Japan



中國人民大學
RENMIN UNIVERSITY OF CHINA

Empowering Women to Utilize and Protect GIAHS for Rural Revitalization: a Study from China

TAN Shuhao 谭淑豪

School of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, Renmin University of China

中国人民大学农业与农村发展学院

E-mail: shuhaotan@ruc.edu.cn; Tel: 13811543899



Main Contents

1. Introduction:
understanding GIAHS
2. Women's roles in
utilizing and protecting
GIAHS for rural
revitalization in study sites
3. Policy suggestions for
empowering women





1. Introduction

- **Understanding GIAHS**
- **GIAHS and rural revitalization**
- **Challenges confronting GIAHS**
- **Why women?**



Understanding GIAHS



中國人民大學
RENMIN UNIVERSITY OF CHINA

- **GIAHS are characterized by**
 - **preserving agri. biod. of global significance**
 - **maintaining recoverable ecosystems**
 - **inheriting high-value traditional knowledge and culture**
 - **emphasizing the coexistence of human and environment**
- **Better address the challenges by applying the G's knowledge and experience**



- **G vs. non-G. agri. Systems:** higher and stronger versatility; to better play the G's multif. to promote RR...
- **Multif. of Hani terraced field system includes**
 - Economic func.:** income, food security, employment ...
 - Ecological f.:** protect soil from erosion, maintaining biod...
 - Cultural f.:** maintain & inherit the cultivate rice related cultures, such as the **New Rice Festival**; Tourism culture...

Challenges confronting GIAHS



G: active land use systems composed of humans, land, water resources, crops, flora and fauna. Any element fails, ... threaten the entire system

- **Loss of rural population, especially the youth**
- **Climate change**
- **Land degradation/land abandon**
- **Adjustment of crop planting structure**
- **Land occupied for non-agri. purposes (eg. tourism...)**

Why women?



Women play role in utilizing and protecting G for RR

- **Main force of rural left behind personnel**

The left behind women in rural areas had increased from 32.53 million in 2008 to 54.4 million in 2019. Although it has been decreased by 7.2% in 2022 compared to 2019, it will continue to maintain a stable and declining trend in the future.

- **Traditional women: maintain G's basic multif.**

Engaging in agricultural labor and cultural inheritance through family education and food preparation

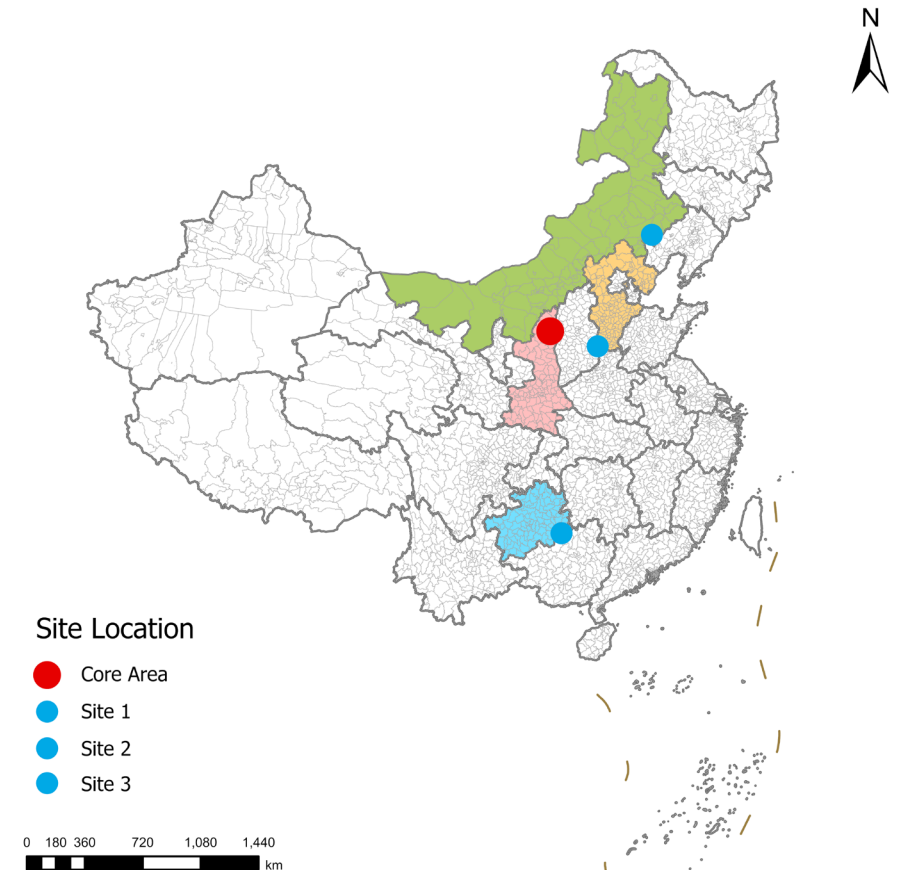
- **New women: expand some of G's multif.**

Expand the G's multifunctionality through e-commerce platform sales and other means



2. Women's roles in utilizing and protecting G for RR in study sites

- **The major study site**
- **Roles of traditional women**
- **Roles of new women**
- **More examples of new women from other G sites**



The major study site



- **Site location:** Jiaxian Traditional Chinese Date Gardens, Shaanxi Province (April 29, 2014)
- Land area 1324.5 km², population about 0.2 million, 76% of the county. The jujube forest covers an area of 27.3 thousand ha, 175 million kg dates...
- **“life-saving plant”, the “hard-core crop”**



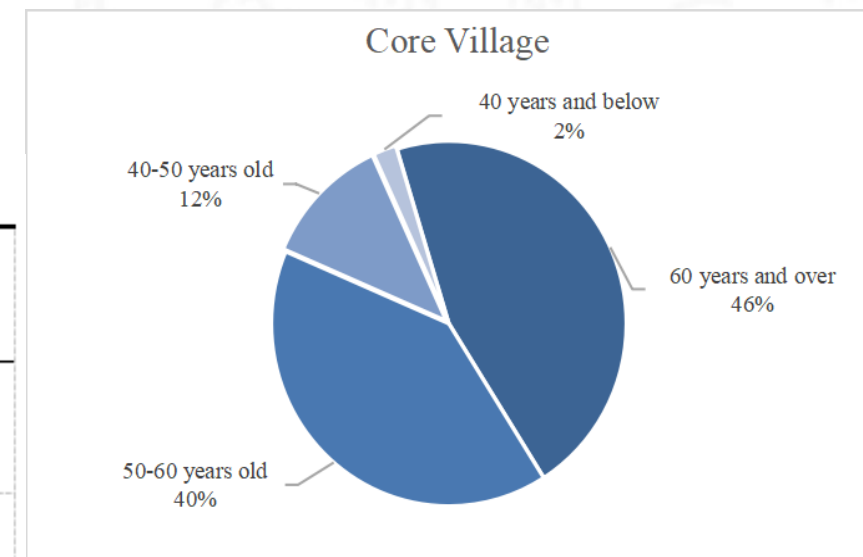
The major study site



- **Site location:** Thousand-Year-Old Chinese Date Garden , Nihegou Village, Jiaxian (April 29, 2014)
- Land area 9.81km², resident population about 172. The Thousand-Year-Old jujube forest covers an area of 36 mu, More than 1100 date palms.
- **Female demographics**

Table 1 Distribution of population in Core Village

Site	Total pop.	Permanent pop.		Female pop.		Labor pop.		Female labor pop.	
		No.of person	Share (%)	No.of person	Share (%)	No.of person	Share (%)	No.of person	Share (%)
N	887	172	19.39	94	54.65	67	38.95	38	56.72



Roles of traditional women



中國人民大學
RENMIN UNIVERSITY OF CHINA

Traditional women's roles in production and life enable the G's basic functions to be maintained

- They work together with men in agri. activities (pruning, date picking, and drying dates...), making rational use of resources and maintaining the economic and ecologic functions of G... (Old man hits dates, wife picks them up, son and daughter come to help)
- They inherit the Jujube catering culture by making foods (date Hua Mo and date cakes)...
- They inherit other Jujube related customs (e.g., festivities and rituals, ...)



Roles of new women



New women have expanded G's multifunctionality

- **Who represent the new women?**
 - Some left behind women, **female** entrepreneurs, grassroots government officials, agricultural technicians, returning youth...
- **What do they do to expand the G's multi.?**
- **Sell goods online**
- **Process products to enhance the value chain and added value**
- **Incorporate G into local development plans, simultaneously promote G utilization & protection, and RR...**
- **Better use natural resources**

Roles of new women



Xiaohong, online influencer

- **Who is Xiaohong?**
a local young women, 0.17mil. pictures, 2828 videos, sold dates 0.50 mil. Kg...
- **What does Xiaohong do?**
Sell dates and other local goods online
- own dates
- others' dates and goods
- clean dates from cooperatives collected from other hhs.....



More examples of new women from other G sites



Site 1: Aohan Dryland Farming System

Female agri. Technician: Protect biodiversity by conserving and exchanging local crop varieties (Establish a germplasm resource protection base and plant 73 traditional varieties such as foxtail millet and 12 beans)

Site 2: Dong's Rice Fish Duck System

Returning young women: organize research and learning activities, sell goods online, and host Dong ethnic song competitions (collects 153 local rice and miscellaneous grain varieties, preserves 126 varieties of seeds)...

Site 3: Shexian Dryland Stone Terraced System

Female entrepreneur and f. village leader: drive rural left behind people to cultivate abandoned G land, utilize and protect G, and play the multi. of G ...

New women's roles in the G sites



	Chinese Date Gardens	Rice Fish Duck System	<u>Dryland</u> Farming System	<u>Dryland</u> Stone Terraced System
Designated time	2014	2011	2012	2022
Site location	Shaanxi	Guizhou	Inner Mongolia	Hebei
Area of GIAHS	1324.5 km ²	7685 ha	8294 km ²	2768 ha
Major agricultural products	Dates, grains, honey	Rice, fish, duck	Kinds of Grains, beans	Kinds of grains
Women's role	1); 2)	1); 2); 3)	3)	4)

Women's roles in utilizing and protecting GIAHS for RR: 1) sell goods online; 2) inherit culture; 3) conserve biodiversity; 4) use and manage natural resources.



3. Policy suggestions for empowering women

- *Enhance gender awareness, value and status of rural women*
- *Unleashing traditional women's potential*
- *Empower new women in different roles*
- *Organize study tours for students, impart and inherit G's related culture*
- *Encourage the female youth to return hometown*



中國人民大學
RENMIN UNIVERSITY OF CHINA

Thanks for your
attention

