

# **WOMEN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SECTOR**

By

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## Introduction

- Women's issues **loomed large on social and political** agendas in the 1960s. In the dev agendas in 1960s & 1970s when several International dev Agency **recognized failure of projects** due to **exclusion of women** in the design & implementation of projects
- Whilst women play important roles and **contribute significantly** to the **impact** and **sustainability** of development projects, their contribution to society often **undervalued and unappreciated.**
- Since the 1975 UN World Conference on Women, a series of international conferences/events has helped **sustain the focus** on **women's involvement**

## Introduction

- In the fisheries sector, the first major event was the **Global Workshop on Aquaculture** (1987), as a prelude to the **4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women**.
- From 1995, programs began to **recognize that success** in development depends on the **community** and the **interrelationship between people**, and not on women and/or men **per se**, hence giving rise to **gender rather than women's programs** (Levy 1996).
- Gender, is constructed socially, **is defined as the relationship between man and woman**. Biological characteristics are not significant. **Gender roles** of women and men are defined by **society**, vary among **different societies** and **cultures**, classes and **ages**, and may change through history

Women challenges and opportunities in the fisheries and aquaculture sector

- Women from the fishery communities in Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America are often depicted as:
  - **Overworked**, with their contribution **unrecognized**, unvalued or **undervalued**;
  - **Malnourishment** and **long working hours** may have sociological, economic and health implications for women
  - **Lowly-paid** and exploited by employers;
  - **Illiterate**; Access to general education is often **denied children**, especially **girls**, from fishing families
  - Undernourished and **sickly**, with **poor** productivity;

Women challenges and opportunities in the fisheries and aquaculture sector

- Women from the fishery communities in Southeast Asia, **Africa** and Latin America are often **depicted** as:
  - **Lacking opportunities** for skills upgrading and access to training.
  - **Insignificant** number of women holding managerial posts with **decision-making powers**.
  - **Violence**, recognized as the key factor that prevents women from exercising their rights
  - **No basic rights** (voting right, choice of career and even dressing in some countries
  - **Lack of education** on **safe sex** and **wives** must be aware of their rights to protect themselves against **HIV/AIDS**

RECENT  
DEVELOPMENTS IN  
GENDER AND GENDER  
IN FISHERIES AND  
AQUACULTURE

- A number of recent developments have similarly indicated the growing attention and importance given to gender issues
  - 2010, United Nations Entity for **Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women**) created by the UN General Assembly:
    - (i) to support **intergovernmental bodies** in their **formulation of policies**, global **standards** and **norms**;
    - (ii) to help **UN Member States, specifically AUC** to implement these standards to forge effective partnerships with civil society; and
    - (iii) to hold the **UN system accountable** for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress (UN Women, 2011).

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN GENDER AND GENDER IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

- A number of recent developments have similarly indicated the **growing attention** and importance given to **gender issues**
  - 2010, a “**Women in Fisheries Workshop** – Recasting the Net: Defining a Gender Agenda for Sustaining Life and Livelihoods in Fishing Communities” was convened by the **International Collective in Support of Fishworkers** (ICSF).
  - 2010 Thailand, the Global Conference on Aquaculture 2010 (FAO/NACA, 2012) included a thematic review addressing **human capital development** (HCD) and **gender issues in aquaculture**
  - 2011, the Third Global Symposium on **Gender in Aquaculture** and **Fisheries** (GAF3)

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN GENDER AND GENDER IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

- **Merely involving women** in development programmes without delving into **issues of culture** and the state **will not contribute to sustainable development** and correct the disparities between the sexes, hence the need to consider gender.
- Until recently, **gender analysis focused** on occupational roles of **men & women**,.
- Definition of **poverty** became multidimensional and more **holistic** coupled with an on **reducing vulnerability** of women, **genderi ncreased focus has become more central** to fisheries policy and development practice.
- Fisheries **resource management** increasingly linked to all levels “**deck to dish**” fish **value chain** in which both men and women have important roles to play.

## Opportunities :Gender equality objectives

- The **PFRS 7 policy objectives** are consistent with the **Malabo Declaration 7 goals and targets** and mirrored in the **5 FAO gender equality objectives** which are:
  - (i) women participate **equally** with men as **decision-makers** in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes;
  - (ii) women and men have **equal access** to and **control over decent employment** and **income, land** and other productive resources;
  - (iii) women and men have **equal access** to **goods** and **services** for agricultural development and to markets;
  - (iv) women's work burden is **reduced by 20 %** through improved technologies, services and infrastructure; and
  - (v) the percentage of agricultural aid committed to **women/gender-equality related projects** is increased to 30 percent of total agricultural aid.

## Challenges

### ■ Challenges

**70% of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty** are women;

- Among the world's **900 million illiterate people, women** outnumber men two to one;
  - More **women** than men are **malnourished**;
  - **Pregnancy complications** are the largest single cause of **death** among **women** in their reproductive years;
  - **Wages** of women are **30-40% less** than men for comparable work;
  - **Women** constitute less than **one-seventh** of administrators and managers in developing countries;
- Women hold only **10% of the seats** in the world's **parliaments** and **6% in national cabinets**.

## challenges

- **Challenges**

- **Sustainable development** cannot occur without **equal opportunities** for women in the economic, social and political spheres .
- However, the **lack of unbiased gender data** on the nature and role of men's and women's contributions, especially from developing countries, **may hinder the actions** taken to address critical problem areas

## Opportunities: Gender equality objectives

- To **enhance gender equity, gender mainstreaming the PFRS/Malabo declaration** promotes the use of the gender analysis framework for development projects:
  - Creating a working environment for women **free from discrimination and harassment**;
  - Increasing number of **women in senior positions** to achieve more **equal gender balance**;
  - Providing **training and counseling** to staff to overcome gender barriers; •  
Providing **advice/assistance** for planning, implementation & monitoring of gender sensitive projects;
  - Bringing **forward new ideas** about gender equality

## Conclusion and Recommendations

- **Strengthen cooperation between ATLAFCO/FAO and AU-BAR/NPCA to focus on the followings:**
  - Implement a **Fisheries and Aquaculture Gender Mainstreaming Strategy** that is in line with the AUC on Gender Equality;
  - Improve through the **RAFEP gender awareness and gender mainstreaming capacity** of senior managers and staff through a capacity development programme;
  - Strengthen ATLAFCO/AU-IBAR/NPCA and FAO efforts to develop a **core set of gender indicators**;
  - Create within **RAFEP** and in other similar women organizations opportunities for **regular sharing of experiences** and **lessons** on gender activities;
  - Strengthen focus on **gender equality** and move beyond **women's issues**;
  - Improve the **gender dimension** in the fisheries and aquaculture sector and **promote coherence** in the gender equality framework;
  - strengthen **management accountability** for and leadership in promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming

## Conclusion and Recommendations

- Strengthen **Research** through cooperation between **ATLAFCO/FAO** and **AU-BAR/NPCA** to focus on the followings :
  - Develop research and gender **analysis methodologies**;
  - Collect **unbiased, disaggregated** gender **data**;
  - Help formulate fair policies, programs and legislation;
  - Provide **training to assist scientists** and development specialists in research and program implementation;
  - Develop **sustainable institutional frameworks** for gender mainstreaming;
  - Sustain **continuity in gender sensitive** development research and strategic interventions;
  - Increase **gender sensitivity in research** and policy design and management.

END

■ **Thanks for your kind  
attention**