

Importance of fisheries for women in developing countries - Current situation and future perspectives



International Collective in Support of Fishworkers
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Small-scale fisheries (SSF) contribution to food security and livelihoods

- The fisheries sector, particularly SSF, is the largest employer of men and women in the maritime sector.
- 84% of all people employed in the fisheries and aquaculture sector were in Asia, followed by > 10% in Africa (> 32 % of all people employed in the sector were engaged in fish farming, concentrated primarily in Asia)
- The traditional, small-scale sector accounts for about 70% of fisheries production – vital for food security and nutrition

* 2012 data



Women in Fisheries – important in SSF

- Women represent half of the total working population worldwide in the seafood industry as a whole, with fisheries, aquaculture, seafood processing and all related services
- Women's role in secondary activities is 90%
- Globalisation has led to evolving roles
- Women are integral to SSF



Challenges faced by women in developing countries

- Invisibility and under-recognition of women's work
- Limited access to social security, capital and credit and services
- Difficulties in securing their rights as workers, to land rights and access to fishery resources
- Difficult work conditions
- Lack of spaces for decision-making



Changes in recent years affecting women in SSF

- Mechanisation of production and centralisation of landings
- Declining access to fish for processing and marketing
- War over oceanic and coastal resources
- Fisheries policies focus on production
- Migration for fish farming and fishing
- Aquaculture – threat and opportunity
- Globalisation, trade and competition
- Intra-household stresses and changing gender roles



The way forward



- Promote human rights-based approach - implement the Tenure Guidelines and SSF Guidelines at national levels
- Valorise and legally recognise women's work
- Question models of development that threaten vulnerable groups including women
- Involve women in decision-making and management of resources



The way forward (cont...)



- Enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration to address multiple needs
- Strengthen women's organisations, build capacities and empower women
- Ensure women's rights are protected and fair labour codes established
- Increase awareness of consumers in importing countries



Thank You

