



34 Years in Support of
Small-scale Fishworkers

Yemaya

ICSF'S NEWSLETTER ON GENDER AND FISHERIES

From the Editor

The 60th issue of Yemaya, being brought out after a gap of a year, coincides with a time of global crisis, when nations and communities across the world are battling the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic. It is a time for sombre thought and reflection.

This pandemic has also locked down coastal fishing communities and seriously impacted livelihoods. The case study from Maharashtra, India, in this issue of Yemaya, details the impact on women fishers. Earnings have dropped because of lack of fish, market access, traditional credit sources and clear government policy enabling relief. In India, the government's move to keep the fishing sector open during lockdown helped to vindicate the importance of the sector but the curfew-like conditions of the prevailing lockdown prevented women fishers from availing the benefits of the move. Clearly, the challenges before women fishers and fishworkers have multiplied.

To mark this special issue of Yemaya, a set of experts were asked to respond to a common set of questions on the opportunities and challenges before women in the sector. All agreed that the small-scale fisheries are marked by the devaluation of women's roles and contributions. In their view, this devaluation significantly challenges the sustainability of the sector. Discourse on gender mainstreaming may have increased as a result of efforts of women's organisations, they felt, not so the implementation of policy. And all agreed on the importance of women fishers and organising fishworkers. This is particularly critical now with environmental disasters wreaking havoc on fisheries livelihoods, and a rightward shift in politics leading to the unchecked exploitation of natural resources, including the oceans and rivers.

Women fishers across fishing communities are responding to the challenge. Associations like SEWA in India, AKTEA in Europe, CAOPA, which represents fisherwomen's organisations in 24 African countries, and the National Articulation of Women in Fisheries in Brazil (ANP) have made significant steps forward in advancing the cause of women fishers and fishworkers. They have also advocated strongly for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). However, as Meryl Williams from Australia argues, until the specialised agencies of the UN like FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) firmly back the issues of artisanal women fishers and fishworkers, their lack of recognition will continue in global and national policy debates.

As COVID 19 rages globally, we need to reflect anew on the sustainability of fisheries, and in particular, artisanal small-scale fisheries. Will the sector be able to sustain itself in the face of environmental degradation and pandemic outbreaks? Without concerted policy support what does the future hold? The article by Sarah Harper reveals that women contribute 11 per cent of the total small-scale fisheries catch globally. Thus, although their contribution to sustainability and food security for their communities is enormous, new threats and challenges are likely to add to the existing problems that women in fisheries face. Today, like never before, policy support and action are critical to protect the lives and livelihood of women in the sector.

Finally, in these difficult times, we remember the late Loretta Farina, a nurse from Italy who came in 1962 to India to live for 20 years among the fishing communities of Kerala. Her dictum for sustainable organisation was simple—always involve the people in decision making about interventions that affect their lives. These words ring as true today as they did half a century ago! 📌



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Left in the lurch

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic and nationwide lockdown, fisherwomen in Maharashtra, India, have few fallback options

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The Guhagar fishing village lies in the Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra state in India. It has about 450 fisher families. Earlier, the regular routine for the fisherwomen of the village centred around visiting the beach and fish landing sites early in the morning to gather and buy fish that they would later sell.

Since 25 March this year, India has been under an unprecedented nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19, the novel coronavirus disease. This has severely impacted all economic activity in the country. For fishworkers along the fish value chain this has meant a total stoppage of all work, and loss of income. "Because of COVID-19, for almost a month, all fishing activities have stopped and fishers have no income. Traditional fishers are like daily wage workers who go to the sea daily to catch fish and earn their livelihood," said Ujwala Jaykisan Patil, a Mumbai based fisherwoman leader of the Maharashtra Machhimar Kruti Samiti.

While the government announced a Rs 1.70 lakh crore (USD 22.46) relief package for the poor to help them fight the battle against COVID-19, many, including members of the fishing community of Guhagar, find themselves excluded. According to Deepti Dattatreya Asgolkar, a fisherwoman from Guhagar, "Almost 80-85 per cent fisherwomen and their families in the village do not fall under the BPL (Below Poverty Line) category, and hence, are not eligible for subsidised PDS (Public Distribution System) foodgrains by the government. Also, with no fishing and no source of income during lockdown, who has the money to use cooking gas which costs over Rs 800 a cylinder? So, we go daily to the local forest to get firewood to cook food."

Before the lockdown, the average day for fisherwomen in Guhagar usually started with their leaving home at 3 am to reach the fish landing sites and beaches where fishermen brought the fish catch. There they helped sort out the catch, bought and then proceeded to sell it in local fish markets. Some would go on foot from one residential colony to another, selling fish. Many fisherwomen spent at least ten to twelve hours a day in fish vending and fishing allied activities. All these activities have now come to a standstill. The fisherwomen are now engaged in cooking food not only for their families but also for migrant fish workers stranded in their village.

This plight is not restricted to Guhagar village. The story repeats itself across fishing villages in Maharashtra and in fact all of India. "For the last one month, I am sitting idle at home. Fishermen are not going to the sea to catch fish, and I have no fish to sell. Earlier I used to earn from Rs 200 (USD 3) to sometimes Rs 500 (USD 7) a day selling fish. Now my income is zero. I have received no free rations from the government. If we try and step out, the police catch us because of the curfew," said Tejaswini Kolabakar, a fisherwoman from the Thane district of Maharashtra. Another fisherwoman from Palghar in north Maharashtra, Rekha Gangadhar Tare, added, "Before this coronavirus disease, we fisherwomen used to earn Rs 100-150 (USD 2) a day selling fish. Now our income has dropped drastically. We are somehow just going to local water bodies to catch some fish and feed our stomachs. If we are lucky, we are able to sell fish for Rs 40-50 (USD 0.75) a day."

The National Fishworkers' Forum has demanded that the central government announce an economic package specifically for the fishing community to combat disruption caused by the lockdown, and keeping in mind that the upcoming monsoon ban season will further affect the livelihoods of crores of fishworkers and allied workers.

It has demanded a monthly allowance of Rs 15,000 (USD 200) per fisher family for a three-month period to be paid in advance, and an adequate supply of ration with cooking fuel to the fishworkers.

Meanwhile, in its letter dated 30 March, the Central Department of Fisheries indicated it was proposing financial assistance to those fishers who had bank accounts linked to the government's Unique Identification scheme – Aadhaar. But, so far, no financial help has come.

Even if the government does announce a relief package for fishers, fisherwomen are unsure if they will be covered. "Most of the government schemes and compensation packages are meant for fishers registered with fishing cooperatives. A large number of women involved in fish vending activities are not registered. But they must also be compensated, as they are completely dependent on fishing activities to earn a livelihood," said Ujwala Patil. "Half of the month of March and all of April has been spent in lockdown, which is on till



A dip in livelihood of women fishvendors in Karnataka, India. Most of the government schemes and compensation packages are meant for fishers registered with fishing cooperatives. A large number of women involved in fish vending activities are not registered.

31 May. From 1 June, a seasonal fishing ban will come into force in the west coast for 61 days. Imagine living without any source of income for three months,” said Tejaswini Kolabakar. “We must be provided at least Rs 2,500-3,000 (USD 35-40) per month for the next three months to tide over the impact of the coronavirus outbreak,” said Deepti Asgolkar.

On 10 April, two weeks after the nationwide lockdown came into force, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs issued an amendment to the lockdown rules which exempted “operations of the Fishing Marine/Aquaculture industry, including feeding and maintenance, harvesting, processing, packaging, cold chain, sale and marketing; hatcheries, feed plants, commercial aquaria, movement of fish/shrimp and fish products, fish seed/feed and workers for all these activities”. The amendment made social distancing and proper hygiene practices in these activities mandatory. However the notice did not help the fishing communities in any substantial way. According to Ujwala Patil “Because of the coronavirus disease, fishers are scared. Fishing villages are densely populated areas. They also accommodate migrant fishworkers. Fish markets are crowded, too. Fisherwomen are too scared to venture out”.

The National Fishworkers’ Forum while welcoming the revised guidelines, has asked the government to announce clear directions and advisories from the State Fisheries Department in the public domain and respective websites, as there is a combination of confusion and fear among the fishing communities, which is stalling the resumption of fishing activities. It has also demanded “definite orders with respect to auctioning and sale of fish in the harbours while maintaining social distancing”.

Deepti Asgolkar, asked, “The government may have said fishing activities are exempted, but there is curfew in place, too. Most fisherwomen go walking to the fish market to sell fish. Amid curfew, how do they do that?”

The lockdown has also affected over 100,000 migrant fishworkers stranded in their boats off the Maharashtra coast. These migrant fish workers, mostly from far off states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, are stranded as all transport is shut and there is no way for them to return to their home states. “In spite of approaching various authorities and writing letters to the district collectors, no help has come from the government for these stranded fishers across the Maharashtra’s coast. Since the lockdown, we are supplying them dry rations and drinking water in their boats,” said Kiran Koli of Maharashtra Machhimar Kriti Samiti. Meanwhile, fisherwomen are trying their level best to feed the migrant fishworkers. “There is something about the fishing community that even during a crisis, no one goes hungry. Whatever food is there, is shared between all. While we cook for our families, we also provide food to the stranded fishworkers,” said Ujwala Patil.

The other more long term impacts of the pandemic are also becoming evident on the fisherwomen. For instance, Guhagar fishing village in Ratnagiri has 20 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of fisherwomen who save money and use it for various purposes. In the words of Deepti Asgolkar, “All the 20 SHGs in the village are shut, as no one has money to pay the monthly contribution. These are very difficult times and we have received no support from the government”.

Because of COVID19, for almost a month, all fishing activities have stopped and fishers have no income.

Critical routes

Women fishers, shrimp peelers and mollusk workers in Costa Rica identify priority areas for the recognition and formalisation of their work

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Costa Rica is a country with great marine biodiversity and has an important cultural heritage in its coastal marine areas. However, recognition and opportunities for decent work for the country's small-scale fishers and mollusk gatherers, especially for women who work mainly in pre- and post-fishing activities, are scarce.

The country does not have a fishing census; therefore, the information on the number of fisherpeople in the country's various fishing categories is not up-to-date. There is even less information that can be used to analyse and recognise the role and importance of women in the small-scale artisanal fishing sector and value chains. Women contribute not only to small-scale artisanal fishing but also to various types of pre- and post-capture activities, such as processing and marketing of fishery products – activities which are pillars of support for the sector but continue to be poorly recognised.

Given this situation, in 2019, a study was carried out to support the visibility of women in the different value chains of Costa Rica's fisheries. This was a first step towards formalising and seeking dignified and decent work opportunities and articulating cultural identities related to the sea within the framework of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). The initiative, developed by CoopeSoliDar R.L. was commissioned and financed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (National Institute of Women - INAMU).

The work was carried out with effective participation of fisherwomen, both the leaders and members of Red de Áreas Marinas de Pesca Responsable (Network of Marine Areas of Responsible Fishing and Marine Territories of Life), who formed a working group together with the technical team of CoopeSoliDar RL. The joint team developed a questionnaire containing 63 questions related to the situation of fisherwomen in the family, work, socialisation, cultural links with the sea, violence in the communities (answers being optional), institutional relationships, as well as proposals, dreams and challenges for the present and future.

The team visited 45 communities from the Pacific and Caribbean coast of Costa Rica

and met with 486 women from different value chains representing diverse marine and cultural contexts. Mollusk processors, fillet workers, shrimp peelers, clam processors, artisanal fishers, among others, were interviewed along both coasts of the country, the Pacific and the Caribbean. We discuss here some of the important study findings.

In the small-scale artisanal fishing chain, the majority of women (62 per cent) were between 31 and 60 years of age. Many of these women are therefore at a stage of life where economic autonomy and social security for retirement are important questions. However, most of the work they do is not covered by decent retirement options.

This is in stark contrast to their multiple and sustained contributions to a range of different pre-fishing and post-fishing activities. Women not only carry out the same tasks as male fishermen, but also shoulder the additional responsibility of reproductive tasks.

The study also reveals significant participation of fisherwomen in the various local organizations that revitalise productive actions in their coastal marine territories, ranging from supporting community members, including older adults and children, to engaging with community welfare organizations. There is a significant participation of women in artisanal fishing organizations; however, their participation in decision making spaces is not as frequent.

In the family sphere, half of the women interviewed revealed that they experienced family violence in the community or within their families, expressed in different ways, from physical to verbal and or emotional violence. These women attributed the violence to the use of alcohol and drugs, exposure to football games during closed fishing seasons, various forms of stress, and male chauvinism.

Since the study explored diverse value chains within small-scale artisanal fisheries (shrimp, mollusks and scale fishing), the findings reveal an enormous diversity of practices associated with several little known and studied women's productive activities in Costa Rica.

In all the communities studied, the activity of artisanal fishing is linked to aspects of identity that come from previous generations of women. This traditional knowledge is of vital importance in terms of the conservation



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and sustainability of local marine resources and therefore contribute to sustainable fisheries at the national level.

Women linked to the sea in Costa Rica are still at incipient levels of organization. They perceive that they need to strengthen their organizational processes, become more visible as a sector and gain access to opportunities for recognition, formalisation, improvement of their working conditions, infrastructure and fishing gear, as well as to have decent work in these value chains.

Earnings of women in activities linked to artisanal fishing are generally very low. In most cases, women do not perceive significant changes in their income irrespective of whether the times are bad, regular and good. Variations are few, and according to the data, incomes for the majority are well below the stipulated minimum wages in the country.

Practically all women in the study reportedly invest their earnings to fulfill the basic needs of the family and do not have money left over for leisure and recreation, personal health, education, training and other interests. On the other hand, there are very few opportunities to access institutional care, which is why women of reproductive ages choose to leave their children in the care of relatives or are forced to take them to their places of work in fishing.

Women in most value chains face high occupational health risks. They are exposed to

infections, excess sun, various insect bites in mangroves and coasts, cuts, encounters with wildlife and a variety of diseases.

In general, much of the training received is not aligned to the traditional knowledge they have. Also, not all women who fish, glean mollusks or peel shrimp have a permit or licence that supports the formalisation of their activities.

In all the value chains studied, women were found to be doing at least two or three types of work, including reproductive labour, which was found to be the primary responsibility of the majority of the interviewees. Women do the major work within the family in terms of care giving, preparing food to take to work and taking care of children and the elderly.

In general, the study found that women aspire to a fair recognition of their work in artisanal fishing. The issues of market access, price improvement, access to collection centres, land tenure and real participation in decision making by organizations are aspects requiring urgent attention.

The issue of violence against women is also a concern. While not all women felt confident to discuss the issue, they felt that it needed to be addressed comprehensively, with due attention paid to the consequences of violence and strategies to prevent violence.

With regard to the presence of women in organizations of coastal marine communities,

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the study revealed lower participation in rural areas and higher participation among populations with urban characteristics. Many women felt that there should be greater and more efficient inter-institutional coordination in response to both the demands of the sector and to the specific conditions of women in their different life cycles and aspirations.

The study made the following action recommendations to authorities and institutions in the fisheries sector with respect to the lives and livelihoods of women in fishing communities:

Action 1: Recognition of the contribution of women's work to small-scale fisheries.

Action 2: Recognition of the diversity of work in the different value chains and in the different

marine-coastal contexts in which women participate.

Action 3: Addressing the issue of access to land and sea.

Action 4: Strengthening the issues related to the organization, promotion of networks and effective public policies with respect to the interests of women fishers.

Action 5: Proposing strategies for changing power relations and addressing violence

Action 6: Advancing actions aimed at well being and integral health.

Action 7: Promoting linkage between gender and value chains in artisanal fishing.

Action 8: Building a communication and knowledge generation strategy. 📌

What's New, Webby?



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A new gender initiative

The Gender Climate Tracker (GCT) mobile app and online platform provides experts, practitioners, decision-makers, negotiators, and advocates with easy, on-the-go access to the latest and regularly updated information on policies, mandates, research, decisions, and actions related to gender and climate change. The app, available through the AppStore and GooglePlay, and online platform (<https://wedo.org/gender-climate-tracker-app/>)

serve as a hub of information related to gender mandates within climate policy, the participation of women in climate negotiations, and tracking of gender-specific progress in each country. By reviewing, compiling, and publishing this information, the GCT empowers civil society, governments, and citizens to hold their governments accountable to their gender commitments. In addition, users can submit content. 📌

Women marching on!

Milestones in CAOPA's march for the rights of women in African artisanal fisheries

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On 19 March 2010, in Banjul, The Gambia, men and women professionals from the artisanal fishing sector from nine West African countries presided over the formation and launch of the African Confederation of Artisanal Fishing Organisations: CAOPA.

Ten years later, CAOPA has become an advocacy platform for African artisanal fishing community rights, entering into dialogue with African decision makers, as well as with international partners, like the EU and the FAO. CAOPA is now also stronger: it has member organisations in 24 countries from West, East, and North Africa and from the Indian Ocean. Every 21st November, CAOPA uses the occasion of the World Fisheries Day to establish its advocacy agenda for the year to come.

Since the outset, CAOPA has called for the recognition, respect and promotion of the role of women in African artisanal fisheries. However, in the first couple of years of existence, their advocacy was mainly geared towards fishermen's concerns for securing better access to fishing grounds.

The turning point came in March 2014, when the organisation celebrated the first International Women Day in Abidjan/Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast. This was an occasion for women from 16 African countries to come together and to highlight their diverse and multi-faceted roles in the artisanal fisheries sector. While women are particularly active in fish processing and marketing, they are present all along the artisanal fisheries value chain, both in pre- and post-harvest activities, and as owners of vessels and fishing equipment. They pre-finance the fishing trips, paying for the fuel and food for the crew, sorting out landed fish, processing and marketing it, dealing with the bank and the administration, caring for their family and putting food on the table. Women also play an important role in conflict resolution in the community, and in awareness-raising on a variety of issues, including sea safety. Often their menfolk require persuading to wear a life jacket when going fishing, which they often dismiss as unmanly. "Without the presence of women in fisheries, there will be no sustainable fisheries," highlighted Micheline Dion Somplehi, President of the Women Fish Processors' Cooperatives in Ivory Coast, at the conclusion of this first women's meeting.

This message, since then constantly emphasised in CAOPA gatherings, has led

gradually to the recognition of and respect for women by their men colleagues as bona fide stakeholders in all aspects of the fisheries, from the management of fish resources to the financing of the fishing operations, to processing and trading. This recognition has also been incorporated into the structure of the organisation. The CAOPA board is now constituted on the basis of gender parity, with 4 men and 4 women.

Since 2014, women from CAOPA member organisations gathered yearly on the International Women's Day, in different African countries: Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Uganda, The Gambia, and Guinea. In all of these countries, the organisation of this international event provided an opportunity to give visibility to the local women's organisations, to raise awareness with the public about their role in the local fishing sector, and to make local decision makers listen to their concerns. The result has been the creation, or the reinforcement, of a dialogue between national governments and the women's organisations.

The CAOPA celebration of the International Women's Day also influenced the direction the organisation's advocacy took. It provided an opportunity for women to discuss their own priorities, and the process has helped them to come together with a united voice when the advocacy agenda is discussed in November amongst all CAOPA members, during World Fisheries Day celebrations.

An example of this influence can be seen in the process that led CAOPA to champion the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) in Africa. During the 2017 International Women's Day meeting in Uganda, participants called on African States, in preparation for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022, "to develop, in a participatory, transparent and gender-sensitive manner, a national, and where appropriate regional, Plan of Action for the implementation of the FAO Guidelines on sustainable small scale fisheries".

This recommendation was taken up by CAOPA, who made it its central advocacy priority, expressed both during the Our Ocean Conference in Malta at the end of 2017, and during the 34th Session of COFI in 2018. In collaboration with local women's and men's



International women day marching in Guinea Bissau on 8 March 2015. The increasing involvement of women in the defining of CAOPA advocacy priorities and in its actions has contributed to show that artisanal fishing communities, particularly women, are innovators and active stakeholders.

organisations, CAOPA initiated a dialogue with the governments of Ivory Coast, Guinea and Senegal to develop such national action plans. The first result has been the elaboration, with women's participation, of Senegal's National Action Plan for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, scheduled to be launched beginning of March but postponed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

With this initiative, Senegal recognises the central role of the local artisanal sector to fight poverty and to promote food security, and the importance to ensure its sustainability. However, in the meantime, Senegal continues to allow a dozen fishmeal factories to operate. These fishmeal factories are directly competing with the Senegalese women fish processors for access to small pelagic fish as raw material. This high demand for small pelagics also aggravates the fishing pressure on these already over-exploited resources. Artisanal fishers are amongst those who supply small pelagics to these fishmeal plants, either because they get a better price than they do when they sell to the women, or because they have entered into an unfair long-term contract with the plant. Under such contracts they are only paid at the end of several months, which means they must constantly fish for these plants if they want to be paid. This situation creates tensions between women fish processors and fishers, and even between those fishers who fish for the fishmeal plants, and those who fish for the local markets.

Women fish processors have been at the forefront of the campaign in Senegal calling for the closure of the fishmeal plants, asking their government "to commit resolutely to the sustainable and transparent management of the

fisheries resources and to give priority access to those who contribute to the food and nutritional security of the population" – something Senegal committed to, in theory, through its SSF Guidelines National Action Plan. This lack of policy coherence is detrimental to the interests of women in fisheries, and to food security. It calls for a better alignment of all Senegal policies that affect women in fisheries with the National Action Plan to implement the SSF Guidelines.

In 2017, the CAOPA celebration of the International Women's Day in The Gambia focussed on 'The role of women in promoting environmentally and socially sustainable fishing practices'. A focus of the discussion was illegal fishing, by both the industrial and artisanal sectors, and the lack of political will, and means, of governments to address the issue. Women from countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, The Gambia, Mali and Nigeria all agreed that illegal fishing and poor resource management was adversely impacting their activities. What was interesting was that, rather than only pleading for their governments to take action, they also took things in their own hands, and pledged not to process any more juvenile fish, illegally caught by artisanal fishers.

These examples reveal how the increasing involvement of women in defining of CAOPA advocacy priorities and in its actions has contributed to show that artisanal fishing communities, particularly women, are innovators and active stakeholders in the decision making process. ❏

CAOPA has become an advocacy platform for African artisanal fishing community rights

Did you know that there is a small fishing village called Marianad, in Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala, India, which owes a lot of its history to a public health nurse from Bergamo – the epicentre of the novel coronavirus outbreak in Italy?

This nurse, Laretta Farina, 86, passed away on 12 March 2020, in a retirement home in Bergamo.

History of Marianad

Bishop Peter Bernard Pereira, head of the Latin Catholic church in Trivandrum was a great visionary of socio-economic development practice. In 1960, he started the Trivandrum Social Service Society (TSSS) with the wish to run it on professional lines. The bishop sought advice from an American economist, a Brazilian architect and a Kerala government official familiar with cooperatives. He visited Europe to scout for funds and volunteers who could undertake planned activities which would help to uplift the economic and social

Hence, much time was spent in trying to make the people understand what was going on in their midst, encourage their involvement and help them to shoulder responsibility. During this time the men, who were highly skilled in fishing, and their women, with a good sense of market opportunities, slowly constituted their fishing and fish selling activities.

'Chechi' of Marianad

In Marianad, Laretta was known as Chechi (elder sister) by old and young. She picked up Malayalam quickly, though she spoke it with the slang of the fishing community. She adopted the saree and wore it elegantly. Her influence on the community was proverbial. In the dead of night, she would go to stop drunken brawls between fishermen and their families. In the dark, she would shine the torch onto her face and call out the man by name. The sound and sight of Chechi was enough to turn the violent man into an apologetic timid child!. She commanded respect by her very presence. The next morning, she would go back to the family and talk to them with love and concern and admonish the man for his actions. But she always left with a smile and a loving touch.

A skilled organiser

In the early 1970s the fishers organised into a cooperative, which was formed after considerable struggles between them and the village merchant-money lender. They wanted the freedom to sell their fish and not be bonded to him. Laretta, along with her colleagues – who were by then all Indians – stood by the demands of the fishers and helped them to organise the Marianad Malsya Ulpadaka Cooperative Society (Marianad MUCS) under the aegis of the Kerala government. Laretta was a good organiser. She was very methodical and systematic. She realised that methods are not universal, but can vary according to a person's experiential knowledge and was open to the great knowledge of the fishers, who were illiterate. Working in a community, which had a low self-esteem and was also shunned by the larger society, Laretta asserted that a person's dignity resulted from both the person's own assertions and actions, as well as the perception of others. Many fishermen would come to the cooperative office straight from the seashore – often bare-bodied with their chests exposed. She used to insist that no fishermen should enter their cooperative office without being properly dressed. Initially there was resistance. But soon there was realisation among the fishermen how such behaviour was important both for their own collective pride and dignity and the way others in society thought about and valued them.

Laretta had a caring professionalism in her dealings with the men and women of the fishing community. She emphasised the need to be understanding and kind, but yet firm

PROFILE

Tribute: A fishing village in Kerala mourns Italian nurse Laretta Farina of Bergamo

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Source: Manorama Online | April 08, 2020



Laretta Farina

development conditions of the thousands of fisherfolk in his diocese. Responding to the bishop's call, a team of three women, from three countries, belonging to an international professional women's volunteer group arrived in Trivandrum in 1962. Laretta Farina, then 28, was one of them.

Marianad (the land of Mary) was a created village. TSSS bought land at a coastal tract called Allilathura (the coast with no people) and built 56 well-designed, low-cost houses as part of a housing cooperative. Fishers from the coastal villages in Trivandrum were requested to come and stay there. Only the really poorest, who had nothing to lose, ventured to take the challenge. The bishop, based on his learning from past failures to help his community, gave the organisers three radical principles to follow. Do not provide anything free. Try to assess the real needs of the people, not their wants. Always involve the people in the decision making about interventions that affect their lives.

Initial years

Laretta and her colleagues facilitated the starting of a crèche, a nursery school, a small health clinic, a group savings scheme, a club of young girls learning crafts, an arts and sports club, a mahila samajam (women's collective), and finally a fishermen's cooperative – all evolving organically. The basic aim behind the activities was to initiate an informal educational process to encourage changes, to build awareness and inspire self-confidence.

and fair in dealing with all people, irrespective of their position in society. Such values and the full participation of the fishers in the management of their cooperative made it one of the best functioning in Kerala. The strong resolve of the fishers to resist all opposition to their organisational efforts and their excellent cooperation led to the Marianad MUCS being recognised in the official Economic Review 1977 of the Government of Kerala as “an eye-opener to the fishermen cooperatives in Kerala. Dedicated leadership and the felt need of the fishermen for united action against the exploitation by the middlemen could be reckoned as the contributory factors for the dynamic outlook of Marianad”. In 1985, the Kerala government woundup all MUCS cooperatives and created the Matsyafed which was modelled along the basic lines of the Marianad MUCS. Marianad, with over 1,500 families now, has two well-functioning Matsyafed cooperatives.

Lauretta leaves Marianad

Lauretta left Marianad in 1977 after playing a lead role in creating the new village of Marianad from the land with no people. She went back to take care of her invalid father. She also nursed her ailing mother and Alzheimer-stricken sister in her home town of Caravaggio in Bergamo Province. Later, when some of her earlier colleagues took the initiative to organise the first international conference of fishers and their supporters in Rome, they visited her in Bergamo. She put them in touch with some members of the Communist-led municipality of Rome who could probably

help with the arrangements. It was through these contacts that the conference, held in 1984, was ‘sponsored’ by the municipality and permission was granted to have an international cultural event by the fishers at the world famous Piazza Navona. During the conference, which she attended, Lauretta got the satisfaction to see how the Marianad experiment became an important basis for the creation of a big international network of fishers and their supporters. Lauretta visited Marianad again once, 25 years later, in 1992 to the great joy of the community. Marianad is now one of the biggest, prosperous and well organised fishing villages of Kerala. The Matsyafed Cooperatives now functioning in the village received the President’s award for the best primary fishery cooperative in India on two occasions. In 2015, Lauretta was taken to a retirement home in the town of Treviglio in Bergamo in an advanced state of dementia.

On 12 March 2020, some of us who worked closely with Lauretta were together for dinner. It was 9.30 pm. Listening to the news about the rapid spread of COVID-19 virus in Bergamo, we wondered whether there was any news of Lauretta. At about the same time, in that retirement home, Lauretta left us and joined her creator. The epitaph on her coffin read: *Vi ho amati tutti – uno ad uno*. Yes, she loved us all – each one of us in a very special way.

Source: <https://english.manoramaonline.com/news/kerala/2020/04/07/marianad-fishing-village-italian-nurse-lauretta-farina-bergamo.html> 📄



Milestones

By **N. Venugopalan**
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Delivered by women, led by men

A report on gender and equity in the global health and social workforce

How do we address the question of inequality in global health infrastructure, especially during the pandemic grip of COVID-19? The report, produced by the WHO Global Health Workforce Network’s Gender Equity Hub is the latest gender and equity analysis on the health workforce – looking collectively for the first time at issues of leadership: decent work free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment; gender pay gap; and occupational segregation across the entire workforce.

The health sector is a major employer of women. Using a review of 170 studies from the global North, the report shows that there are major gaps in data and research from low and middle income countries (LMICs) with respect to the gender and equality dimensions of the health workforce.

The demand for a better health dividend shows that there is an estimated shortfall of 18

million new jobs in LMICs. The gender dividend argues that education and autonomy are likely to improve family education, nutrition, and women and children’s health. The development dividend argues that new opportunities will be created which will work as fuel for economic growth and universal health coverage.

This report calls for gender transformative policies and measures to be put in place if global targets for better health and gender outcomes are to be achieved. It serves as an essential resource to all policy makers, practitioners, researchers, educators and activists in the sector.

The report ‘*Delivered by Women, Led by Men: A Gender and Equity Analysis of the Global Health and Social Workforce*’ may be downloaded from <https://www.who.int/hrh/resources/health-observer24/en/> 📄

The way ahead

The exclusion of women from organizing bodies is a key challenge facing women in Japan's coastal fisheries

By **Kumi Soejima** (soejima.kumi@gmail.com), Associate Professor, Setsunan University, Japan

In Japan, the Fishery Cooperative Associations (FCAs) are key entities in the effort to protect the environment in coastal fisheries. They manage traditional fishing rights with legal support from the government, and are embedded into a multi-layer management system – including Total Allowable Catch controls for some species, effort control by Total Allowable Effort, prefectural government licensing systems, and traditional rights based management.

Women in Japanese coastal communities have been organized and connected to FCAs for many years. However, they have not had full-membership rights because of the Japanese law and the practice of 'one member per household', with membership traditionally reserved for men. The consequence of this practice is that FCAs have few women members, and few young members, since newcomers are seldom recruited.

This membership pattern also restricts renewal of fishing communities' approaches to the management of fisheries, which tend to focus on the harvesting stage and the interests of men, while neglecting post-harvest and community well being.

Therefore, the situation is that people who are key to the survival of a thriving and sustainable fisheries, especially young men and women, are excluded from decision making processes. Instead, elderly men and former fishers who are unable to fish are the regular members managing the resources and maintaining their influence and power within the FCAs.

Women are involved in voluntary activities as members of FCA women's groups which play a prominent role in the economy of many fishing communities by connecting local fishing,

local processing and local distribution. Such examples of women's entrepreneurship offer hope for the renewal and revitalisation of fishing communities.

To enable this vital renewal to occur, the national fishery plans and laws should aim at revitalising communities as well as the entrepreneurship capacities of women and men. The government should encourage or require that local fisheries governance mechanisms, such as the FCAs, have broader and much more representative memberships, including, in particular, membership from women and youth. ❏

KUMI SOEJIMA



Fisher woman, Japan. Women in Japanese coastal communities doesn't have full membership rights because of the Japanese law and the practice of 'one member per household', with membership traditionally reserved for men.

Such examples of women's entrepreneurship offer hope for the renewal and revitalisation of fishing communities

Fewer fish, ageing fishers

Declining incomes and ageing villages mean that women are likely to be the mainstay of families and communities in the small-scale fisheries in Southeast Asia

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In the last few decades, attention on and analysis of women in fisheries and aquaculture have changed tremendously, especially in Southeast Asia. In the 1990s, just talking about women's role in fisheries was considered to be new. Later on, women in the fisheries network emerged with the leadership of the Mekong River Commission, and Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries symposiums started to be organized. However, the discussion was mainly around gender division of labour. 'Women do fish' was the focus of many of the studies and articles during that time. The perspectives based on political economy that discussed the rights of women to resources as well as to decision making came much later. Our better understanding on what it means to be women fishers or women's experience in fishing communities, and how women and men would be affected differently from conservation policies, trade policies, as well as through climate change, had to wait nearly a decade to reach the mainstream.

At the same time, under a different stream, women in small-scale fish processing as well as in fish processing industries have been studied not under the framework of women and fisheries but more under the framework of women factory workers and women's home-based micro enterprises. Studies covering workers in fish factories, especially the migrant women workforce, raised concerns with regard to the sheer numbers of workers, their poor working conditions and lack of labour rights. Gender relations surrounding their employment and families were analysed. Studies that documented the piece rate and casual/informal nature of their employment that sometimes included unpaid family workers, especially children, helped in raising awareness of the plight of these workers. However, the issue here was more on working conditions rather than on fishing itself.

The research on women fish traders, especially those linked to value chains, started to increase. The issue of value chain analysis came up as an exciting opportunity to highlight women's role in fishing industries, as well as how women were affected by the general economic policies that affect both fish industries and other trades. Another focus area was nutrition. In studies on the nutritional values of small fish, women utilising small fishes for meals presented

a focus for research. Although these nutrition projects were gender biased in the sense that they strengthened women's role as cooks in the family, they also highlighted women's role in improving the well being of poor fishing families. On the other hand, women's role in small-scale aquaculture was studied more in relation to women in agriculture, and as part of the diversification of small-scale farming through backyard fish raising.

In Southeast Asia, there is very little organizing among fishers, probably because many fishers in this region combine farming and fishing and there are few full-time fishers, or they are scattered if they exist, unlike in South Asian countries. Such scattered nature of fishers in Southeast Asia has also led to lower presence of women from fishing communities in the women's movement. Most part-time fishers identify themselves as farmers, and fishing is considered as part of their secondary income. The only full-time fishers are coastal fishers (except for some in the Tonle Sap floating villages), and these coastal villages are often not targeted for development projects because of their relatively higher income compared to inland small-scale farmers. The scattered nature of the fishers has not attracted labour organizations that tend to focus on organizing factory workers.

The marginal interest in women in fisheries started to change in this millennium with researchers and practitioners starting to link the different issues related to women in fisheries. This led to a rise in studies on the impact of climate change and migration, rise in interest on value chain, as well as the gender differentiated impact of policy responses to climate change and migration to fishing communities. This in turn helped in looking at gender in fisheries from broad and diverse perspectives that attracted more researchers.

Southeast Asia, especially mainland Southeast Asia, is experiencing a decrease in fish resources due to a drop in water levels and erratic climate phenomena, over-fishing and illegal fishing, pollution, dam construction and sand mining, as well as coastal investment of industry and tourism, etc. Aside from such push factors, there are pull factors that attract youth to move out of fishing as a profession to look for other jobs in urban areas. Urbanisation



Cambodian women migrant fishworkers sorting fish in Thailand. In Southeast Asia, there is very little organizing among fishers, probably because many fishers in this region combine farming and fishing and there are few full-time fishers.

is creating more employment in factories and service sectors. Young people, faced with limited options in fishing communities, are moving out of fishing and opting for manufacturing and service sector employment. This is even more so for women. For factory work and service sector work, there are more jobs for young women, even though (or because) it is less paid. For men, they need to move out to larger cities to work. Even though the price of seafood is on the increase, the squeeze in fishing area is affecting full time fishers. A similar or even worse trend is seen among those in inland areas like Tonle Sap in Cambodia. For inland fishers, fishing is an important income to supplement meagre farming incomes, and that is getting more and more difficult to sustain.

The decrease in fishing income has pressured women and children to support the household finance through greater engagement in non-fish employment. For example, it has been seen in coastal Cambodia that increasingly more women are working in garment factories and casinos near their fishing villages to support their fishing households. Older women who cannot go for factory work are increasingly engaged in piece rate fish processing work such as crab meat picking. But these incomes are not enough to keep the youth in, and the average age of fishing communities is rising rapidly.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)/Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) regional consultative workshop on demographic changes in fishing communities in Asia held in November 2019 highlighted the phenomenon of ageing in Asia's fishing communities. Case studies in Thailand and Cambodia showed the decreasing trend in the number of fishers as well as the increasing trend

of ageing in fishing communities compared to the national average in these two countries. For instance, in Thailand, the Trat province, where the long coastal line allows many fishers to make a living, consistently had a slightly higher than the national average percentage of population aged 60 and above, over the last ten years. In 2018, Trat had 16.4 per cent of population above age 60 while the national average is 16.1 per cent. In Cambodia, while the national average of population above age 60 and above is 7 per cent, districts with a higher fishing population have proportions ranging from 7.8 to 9.5 per cent.

The ageing fishing communities continue to fish, since their identity as fishers are strong. However, the elderly fishers cannot manage larger fishing boats and will have to shift to smaller boats. In future, middle sized boats may no longer exist and there will be only small and large sized boats. At the same time, there will be increasing need for elderly care in communities in countries where elderly care services and support are almost non-existent. Prevailing gender norms will put higher pressure on daughters to come back and look after ageing parents.

When we examine broad changes in women's roles in fishing communities, we see how women supported small-scale fishing first by providing supplementary income to maintain livelihoods as fishers, and later on, by supporting aged fishers through elderly care. The role of women in these fishing communities is getting more and more important. Women are less mobile than men in fishing and they might become the mainstay in these fishing communities. In that sense, it is important that women are given the power to manage the fishing resources so that they will be able to create a sustainable livelihood in these fishing communities. ❖

The marginal interest in women in fisheries started to change in this millennium with researchers and practitioners starting to link the different issues related to women in fisheries.

Women fish more than you think!

Women's small-scale, part-time fishing and gleaning activities globally may contribute nearly 3 million tonnes of seafood, with a landed value of around \$5.6 billion.

By **Sarah Harper**
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In many cultures and contexts around the world, fishing (like hunting) is considered a male domain and is closely associated with masculinity. Moving along the fish value chain from fishing to processing, more women appear. In fact, much of the labour needed to convert fish into consumable products is done by women. The role of women is more visible in seafood processing, especially on an industrial scale, than in fishing activities. But, as we take a closer look, and challenge assumptions about gender roles, we can see examples of women fishing along beaches and shorelines around the world. They are often on foot, collecting seafood by hand or using the most basic fishing equipment. Fisheries don't just take place on big boats at sea – they involve so much more; however, policies tend to focus more on the former. The implications of missing women as important actors in the fisheries sector is

that fisheries policies may exacerbate existing inequalities by failing to consider gender differentiated outcomes. They tend to be gender blind but not necessarily gender neutral.

At the international policy level, gender equality has been recognised as critical to advancing sustainable development, to food security and to poverty reduction, calling on countries to adopt strategies to promote gender equality across all sectors of the economy, including fisheries. However, the data necessary for understanding gender dimensions of fisheries and advancing gender equality in the fisheries sector is lacking.

My colleagues and I at UBC's Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries and the Vancouver School of Economics set out to address the lack of policy-relevant data on gender and fisheries, focusing specifically on the underrepresented role of women in fisheries. With extensive

DANIKA KLEIBER



Gleaning in the reef flats of Danajon Bank (Philippines), an activity often overlooked in fisheries data collection and undervalued in considering the food and livelihood impacts of small-scale fisheries.



Women dominate the seafood processing sector, converting the catch into marketable and consumable products. Here a Heiltsuk woman grades herring spawn-on-kelp for international export at Bella Bella's fish processing plant in the Traditional Territory of the Heiltsuk Nation, Canada.

experience in global-scale fisheries studies, the scope of this work was not new to the group, but the subject matter was. This study, titled 'Valuing invisible catches: Estimating the global contribution by women to small-scale marine capture fisheries production' and published on 4 March 2020, is the first attempt at estimating the volume and value of small-scale fisheries catches by women worldwide. This was no small feat, as many countries do not collect sex-disaggregated fisheries data, and the fisheries data that do exist, often omit sub-sectors where women are involved.

What exactly counts as fishing? Typically, what gets recorded in national fisheries statistics and gets the attention of policy makers is large-scale industrial fisheries for commercially valuable species, boat-based operations, and full-time, paid activities. What is usually missed are small-scale, part-time activities for home consumption or sale at local markets; and the collection of invertebrates and small fish from shore for a few hours per day. The latter often involves women and children gathering seafood from the beach on their way to school and back, something that happens, for example, in countries like the Philippines. This might not seem like a lot but can really add up and make substantial contributions to food and livelihood security in some of the most vulnerable regions of the world. This new study indicates that catch

by women really do add up, contributing nearly 3 million tonnes of seafood, with a landed value of around \$5.6 billion, or approximately \$10 billion real, annually when adjusted for purchasing power parity. Putting this in context, this number represents roughly 11 per cent of global small-scale fisheries catches, a portion not recorded in national fisheries statistics or considered in fisheries management plans and policies that aim to promote food and livelihood security. The implications of overlooking these contributions are potentially adverse impacts on sustainability and human wellbeing.

In fisheries contexts around the world, paying specific attention to women, makes for better fisheries management by accounting for activities often not seen as fishing, such as the shoreline collection of invertebrates by women and children. This is key information for understanding the human dimensions of ocean systems, where the future of fisheries and its ability to support humanity must be both ecologically sustainable and socially just. Recognising the role of women in fisheries is a crucial part of this equation. After all, women represent half of humanity! ♣

...Catch by women really do add up, contributing nearly 3 million tonnes of seafood, with a landed value of around \$5.6 billion...

Revive, Renew and Re-launch!

AKTEA, the European Network of Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture, meets to revitalize the network to face current challenges

By **Katia Frangoudes** (katia.frangoudes@univ-brest.fr), Researcher, University of Brest, UMR AMURE, France, **Ruth Brennan** (Ruth.Brennan@tcd.ie), Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellow at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, **Alicia Said** (alicia.said87@gmail.com), Post Doctoral Fellow, IFREMER, France, and **Madeleine Gustavsson** (M.C.Gustavsson@exeter.ac.uk) Research Fellow at the University of Exeter, United Kingdom

AKTEA is the European network of women in fisheries and its main objective is to lobby at European Union level for women rights in fisheries. It was established in 2006 by fisherwomen organisations from different European countries who collectively volunteered to take this movement forward. For several years AKTEA was unable to organise its annual meeting due to lack of financial resources, amongst other reasons. In February 2020, however, the network was able to meet thanks to the partnership collaboration established with Low Impact Fishers in Europe (LIFE) and the financial support provided by the MAVA foundation. This two-day meeting, which was attended by 40 women from across nine European Union (EU) Member States, served to initiate the revival and re-launch of AKTEA. The AKTEA meeting is recognized as an event of capacity-building as part of the GFCM-FAO SSF University initiative, which is designed to build capacity of small-scale fishers and fish workers on select topics, to share knowledge and to promote the exchange of best practices throughout the Mediterranean and Black Sea region.

The meeting focused on various themes including (i) issues related to women's activities in fisheries, (ii) how to overcome the current difficulties of the network, and (iii) a focus on AKTEA's main future objective. The meeting was hosted partly at the European Economic and Social Committee building and attended by a number of members of the European Parliament and the European Commission, and for which the EU Commissioner provided a video speech stating that women should be part of EU fisheries policies. During this meeting, AKTEA, with the support of LIFE, held an information session about EU institutions to raise awareness about men and women's rights and claims as they currently stand in EU policies. The successive sessions involved a discussion between women who exchanged experiences from their different organizations, or countries, and conversed on their aspirations of the AKTEA network.

Women from the Mediterranean (Croatia, Cyprus, Malta, Spain) exchanged views with women of Atlantic (Spain, Azores islands, France, The Netherlands, Ireland) on their contribution in fisheries. They came from different

backgrounds, and collectively represented the various pre-harvesting, harvesting and post-harvesting activities which women participate in. These include net mending, fisheries, shellfish, seaweed harvesting to fishmonger or fish direct sales, tourism and other activities. Some were vessels owners and working on board of fishing vessels, others managing the family fisheries enterprises and working either with their spouse or their sons or daughters. Not all women claimed remuneration for their work. The diverse of activities practiced in different contexts evoked curiosity across the regions, with women wanting to learn more about what each of them was doing, what their problems were, and what opportunities they had in their countries. This conversation was crucial since despite the EU being a common political unit, women's situations and realities are determined by national policies and politics. Sometimes, what is possible in one country can be impossible in another. For example, selling fish directly to consumers is possible in France, Malta and Portugal but not permitted in Spain and Greece. Net mending is a paid job for women in Spain particularly in Galicia, but in other countries, it is recognized as a support/assistance which women carry out 'for free' for the family enterprise. Combination of activities may also be observed - women can be managers but also work on fisheries vessels with their husband (Malta and Croatia), or sell fish, or conduct auxiliary work such as promoting and selling touristic excursions which their husbands conduct in parallel with fishing activities. In some cases, women are vessel owners, fully responsible for the operations and book-keeping of their enterprise. Although the women in the room had different perceptions about their place in the fishing sector, they shared the view that their contribution was not well recognized. As one Spanish woman highlighted, "We are experts without recognition."

The participation of women on board fishing vessels varied across the different countries, and within the same country. In the room, we had a nice mix of individuals with different experiences either as owners or crew. Two of the vessel owners from Spain (Valencia) and Portugal (Azores Islands) worked exclusively with women on board. Some others worked alone, and some with their families



AKTEA meeting, Brussels, Belgium, 26 February 2020. This meeting, which was attended by 40 women from across nine European Union (EU) Member States, served to initiate the revival and re-launch of AKTEA.

(Andalusia, Croatia, Malta). Women's work on fishing vessels seemed important in some countries, and this participation depended on personal choices based on historical roots in fisheries. A woman from Spain explained that her ancestors and immediate family (brothers, uncles, cousins) worked in the fishing sector, so it was only natural for her to also go into fishing. A French woman explained that she first worked as a crew member and then decided to buy a fishing vessel and work on her own. Another established herself as a fisher promoting small-scale fisheries produce to tourists and schools' children. Two women became fishers to carry on the family enterprise after respectively being divorced and widowed. Two others worked with their husbands; one through the year (Croatia) and the second only during the peak period -- especially during the migratory species season (Malta). The Croatian woman received a salary but the woman from Malta did not, explaining that it had been difficult for her husband to remain a fisher, and she gives a hand to ensure that the family tradition is continued.

Some women were also involved in shellfish gathering and seaweed harvesting by foot, mainly on the Atlantic coastline. A French woman from Brittany, was engaged in seaweed harvesting and explained that her job was not only to 'gather and dry' the seaweed along with her spouse, but also to find clients, and deliver the product to the local processing industry. Apart from the productive work to harvest marine products, the shellfish gatherers also contributed to the maintenance of coastal ecosystem and cleaning of the beaches, including collecting green algae in the sea to avoid blooms, and to protect the beaches.

The quest for clients was typical for women engaged in marketing the fish products of their enterprises. This was another task in which women excel. In areas located far from urban markets (islands in Ireland) or in countries such as Cyprus where fish is a scarce commodity, establishing clientele and guaranteeing a good distribution of fish to the local society was considered important. In Malta, selling fish in the streets or in hawkers' markets was a

traditional activity mostly done by women, usually fishers' wives, who went to the national fish auction daily at 4 AM to buy fish, and sell in different villages using small refrigerated vans.

During the summer period many small-scale fishers from the Mediterranean Sea engaged in auxiliary activities, mostly related to tourism. Women from Spain and Cyprus explained the various types of fishing-related tourism that they have developed in their fishing harbours, including on-board fishing trips and 'fish cooking' after the trip. Shellfish harvesters and net makers from Galicia had also developed activities related to tourism, including onshore visits, production of bag and "faux bijoux" from recycled material, and tour-trails promoting fishing activities along the Galicia coastline, predominantly initiated and operated by women. These diversification strategies elicited interest from other women at the meeting who were considering new activities as alternative source of income in areas where small scale fishers were finding it difficult to survive in full-time fisheries. In exchanging knowledge about the different activities, the conversation focused on three main factors: (i) the type of activities taking place, (ii) the marketing procedure involved to promote the new activity, and (iii) the national and European assistance (funding) that the women had benefited from to launch their activities. Exchange of this knowledge was a central point of this interesting discussion that could benefit many women in the room as well as their women colleagues back home and help launch new initiatives their homeports.

Although AKTEA has been formed as an organization of organizations, not all the women attending the Revive and Relaunch AKTEA hailed from national organizations of fisherwomen. Women professional fishers are members of organisations or cooperatives representing fisheries industry either as individuals (France, Portugal, Malta, Cyprus, Croatia, Spain) or as organisations as is the case of Galician shellfish gatherers. However, the importance of organizations and their role in providing women with rights and benefits was

The inclusion of the gender dimension in EU policies was seen as a necessity and priority for women.



A group photo of AKTEA meeting, Brussel, Belgium. Participants from countries without national organisations decided it was time to act at the national or regional levels to establish their own representation.

highlighted, especially by the Spanish women who had a long experience in organizing. An interesting example was of shellfish gatherers and net menders who managed to secure access to social welfare benefits (maternity leave, retirement pension), thanks to their organizational capacity. Professional fisherwomen (owners or crew), and seaweed and shellfish gatherers from other countries in the region had gained access to social benefits like their male counterparts. Women and men in paid employment accessed the same social benefits and rights, including the right to be part of fishers' organisations, and receive training.

Discrimination within organizations was mentioned as an issue, though not however, across the region. Discussions at the meeting on this issue were long and sometimes conflicted as women undergoing discrimination sought to raise awareness about the realities and reasons. The debate showed that male attitudes were different from place to place. Some women professionals said that while doing the same jobs as men they did not face any discrimination. Discrimination and negative attitudes of men towards women were found in instances where women were in the lead in organisations of men and women. All participants agreed that women should be members of local/national fishworker

organisation, while also creating their own women's organisations to fight for their specific rights.

Within this context, participants decided that the AKTEA network should continue its activities and lobby for women interests at the EU level. The inclusion of the gender dimension in EU policies was seen as a necessity and priority for women. Women organised at national levels consider EU-level organising important to influence EU policies. Participants from countries without national organisations decided it was time to act at the national or regional levels to establish their own representation. For example, women from the Mediterranean region were convinced about the necessity to build their own network at regional and, if possible, national levels.

Participants decided to create two working groups (i) on the future of AKTEA and (ii) on women's participation in the decision-making. Sandra Amézaga Menéndez was nominated to take over the responsibility of communications from Marja Bekendam, the outgoing chairperson of AKTEA, who was moving on to new responsibilities. Participants also thanked Marja Bekendam, for all the excellent work and effort she had invested in the network over the past 10 years. ❏

YEMAYA MAMA

"Locked economies, empty stomachs!"



DOCUMENT

Practical Guide for Gender Analysis in Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture in Southeast Asia

By **Susana V. Siar**
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The Practical Guide for Gender Analysis in Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture is aimed at providing guidance to SEAFDEC (Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center) Departments and ASEAN Member States in the implementation of the SEAFDEC gender strategy as well as human rights-based and gender-equitable approaches in the whole value chain of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in Southeast Asia. Program/project managers, researchers, and fishery officers of the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) and fisheries-related organizations including SEAFDEC are the target audience. The Practical

Guide is designed to support the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). The ultimate goal of the gender analysis is 'more equitable, effective, and targeted policy formulation and decision-making' (p.6). Gender focal persons from ASEAN Member States,

SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments, and partner organizations were involved in its development through a series of consultation workshops. It is being field-tested in some countries in Southeast Asia with funding support from FAO.

The Practical Guide starts with a definition of gender concepts and then goes on to the steps for organizing, conducting, analyzing and disseminating the results of gender analysis. It is divided into ten chapters: (1) Introduction; (2) Rationale; (3) Gender analysis framework; (4) Gender analysis process; (5) When to conduct gender analysis; (6) Who should conduct gender analysis; (7) How to conduct gender analysis; (8) Gender-sensitive indicators; (9) How to analyze the collected data; and (10) How to disseminate the results of gender analysis.

The gender analysis framework follows the structure of Part 2 of the SSF Guidelines using five thematic areas: (1) Thematic area 1 – Responsible governance of tenure; (2) Thematic area 2 – Sustainable resource management; (3) Thematic area 3 – Social development, employment and decent work; (4) Thematic area 4 – Value chains, post-harvest and trade; and (5) Thematic area 5 – Disaster risks and climate change. The Practical Guide recommends focus group discussion (FGD) for conducting gender analysis and provides pointers on how an FGD could be made inclusive. For conducting FGDs, the Practical Guide presents participatory rapid appraisal tools (PRA) suitable for each thematic area and describes the process for using each PRA tool. It also provides a list of guide questions as well as examples of gender-sensitive indicators for each thematic area.

The Practical Guide gives importance not only to the collection of information but to the analysis, validation and dissemination of the findings of gender analysis. It is an all-in-one resource for the what, why, when, who, and how of gender analysis in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

The Guide is available at <http://repository.seafdec.org/handle/20.500.12066/6149>



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Writers and potential contributors to YEMAYA, please note that write-ups should be brief, about 1200 words. They could deal with issues that are of direct relevance to women and men of fishing communities. They could also focus on recent research or on meetings and workshops that have raised gender issues in fisheries. Also welcome are life stories of women and men of fishing communities working towards a sustainable

fishery or for a recognition of their work within the fishery. Please also include a one-line biographical note on the writer.

Please do send us comments and suggestions to make the newsletter more relevant. We look forward to hearing from you and to receiving regular write-ups for the newsletter.

Announcement

Dear Readers,

We are planning to publish Yemaya No. 61 July 2020 as a special issue on SSF contributions and rights to food and nutrition security.

The last date of submission for articles, case studies, interviews with fishing community members, review of legislation and policy related to food safety, photo essays, film and book reviews, reviews of online resources, cartoons (maximum 2000 words for articles, case studies, interviews and reviews, ten photos or paintings or cartoons) is 10 July 2020.

Please send your contributions to Venu at icsf@icsf.net

Small-scale fisheries (SSF) play a unique – yet frequently hidden – role in assuring nutrition and food security in today's world, in which 2 billion people are still considered food insecure and 'zero hunger' continues to be an important Sustainable Development Goal. Provided with adequate support, SSF will likely continue to play this part in the future too. The special issue will pay special attention to how SSF adds to the four dimensions of food security, namely: (1) the availability of food, (2) its accessibility (with a focus on price and income), (3) its quality, and (4) the stability of supply over time. In doing so, we note that these contributions, like many other aspects of SSF economies, are largely undocumented and therefore are still in the process of being understood. (see Costello, C., L.Cao, S. Gelcich et al. 2019. The future of food from the sea. Washington D.C.: World Resources Institute.)

SSF plays a dual role in nutrition and food security. First, it ensures that the approximately 200 million people who are involved in the SSF economy – fishers, processors, traders, transporters, and many others – are able to sustain themselves and thereby enjoy their human right to a better standard of living.

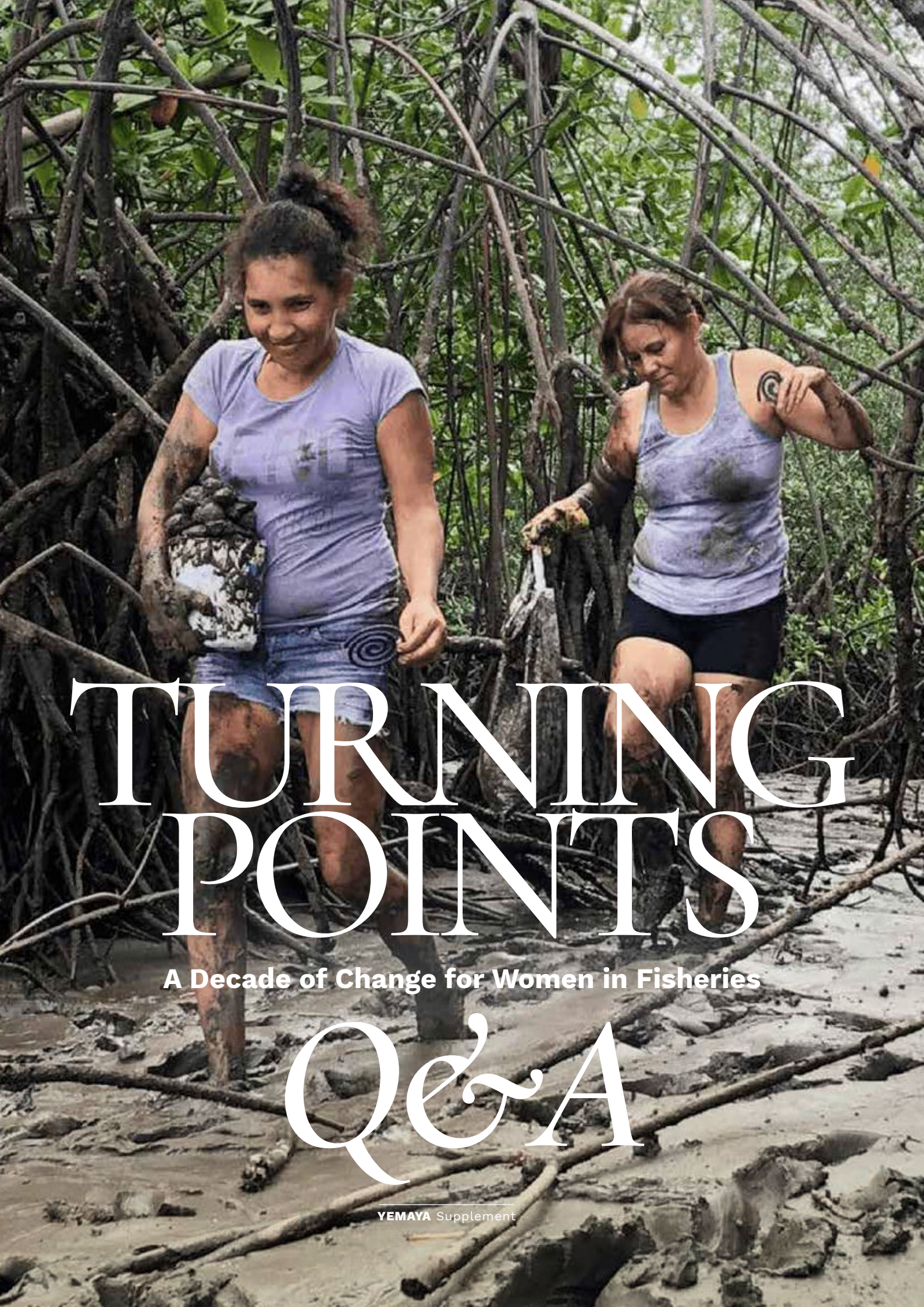
The second role played by SSF is in supplying aquatic foods for large rural and urban populations. Most small-scale fishers sell a major portion of their produce to traders, who transport it to markets both adjacent to coasts and inland. In inland contexts, both wild-caught native fish and sustainably farmed herbivorous species provide bioavailable protein, vitamins and minerals for local communities, including Indigenous Peoples.

SSF communities face many challenges in maintaining their livelihoods and their food provisioning capacities – particularly, inequitable access to resources and markets. To address this, fishers' and farmers' movements have articulated food sovereignty as an alternative vision for democratizing food systems and markets. While SSF trade networks serve diverse domestic and international markets, their major contribution is in providing low-income populations with a variety of aquatic foods that are not only affordable, but also cater to local tastes. In this context, this campaign will address the multiple dimensions of food security in fisheries and raise the profile of SSF in related international processes.

ICSF would be defining 'food security' consistent with paragraph 15 under the right to adequate food and the achievement of food security of the 2004 FAO Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security and within the framework of a human rights-based approach (which is referred to in paragraph 19). As you are aware, the human rights-based approach is reiterated in the 2014 SSF Guidelines.

The articles in this special edition will examine the gender dimensions in fisheries and also can report on changes and new trends in the supply and distribution of fish in both marine and inland small-scale fisheries value chains. They can describe the effects of these changes on fishers, fishworkers and fishing communities, especially women, who play an important role in securing the health and nutrition of their communities.

Yemaya Editorial Team



TURNING POINTS

A Decade of Change for Women in Fisheries

Q&A

YEMAYA Supplement

TURNING POINTS & A

A Decade of Change
for Women in
Fisheries

MODERATORS: NIKITA GOPAL & N. VENUGOPALAN

Front Cover: Mollusk gatherers, South of Costa Rica, Terraba-Sierpe wetland. Photo credit: CoopeSolidar R.L.
Back Cover: A fisherwoman from the Eastern Cape coast of South Africa. Photo credit: Jackie Sunde.

Shellfish gatherers on foot. Cambados, Galicia, Spain.
Photo credit: Virginie de Rocquigny.

This Yemaya supplement focuses on a change that has happened over a decade: a truthful appreciation of women's role in fisheries. Their involvement in the sector follows a similar arc the world over, despite wide differences in society, culture, politics and economics. This supplement is an effort to understand and identify the main factors affecting this over the past decade—causes that have shaped their role, both positively and negatively.

1. Can we say that our discourse explicitly recognises women's human rights, labour rights (including occupational safety and health), environmental rights (participation in resource management, climate change coping mechanisms, differential impact of disasters on women) and social impacts (the role played in community and in ownership rights in near shore fisheries)?

2. Are women Organized better now? How many Organizations are there and how attentive are they at the national or international levels to gender and women's issues?

3. What are the effects of increasing mobility and participation in multiple activities as fisher, trader and wage labourer in processing industry; as farmers in aqua farms; as migrant workers; as women employed in seafood industry; and as caregivers, among others?

4. What is the major change in developing coping mechanisms in your country or in the fisheries you are familiar with? Is there a marked change at the occupational level?

5. What are the legislative or policy supports at the national or international levels? Are there data available about women's employment and participation in fisheries?

6. Empowerment and agency of women are important for community development. What is the nature of progress made? What are the major factors of negative impacts? What are the major factors of positive impacts? What is the resistance to these changes? Where does it come from?





Women, Fisheries & Empowerment

This article is an introductory note to a questionnaire survey that brought experts from across the world together to reflect on key issues in gender and fisheries

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Women make up half the workforce in fisheries. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), almost 70 per cent of workers in aquaculture and almost 90 per cent in the seafood processing sector are women. In Asia and Africa, women account for nearly 60 per cent of fish sellers. The past few decades have seen increasing levels of engagement of policy and programmes with women's issues. The terms Gender Equity and Equality now find at least a reference in several policy instruments.

Gender as a category of inquiry is just about beginning to be accepted and there is still a long way to go. It is yet to be mainstreamed in the larger global arena and until this is done, gender concerns will remain in the footnotes of policy. The recognition must come from within and without, that women are central to change; they are as much the affected as they are the potential prime movers of the system. The World Bank's well-known 'Hidden Harvests' report, for example, had brought to fore the significant contributions that women made to the harvesting of fish, which till then was considered almost exclusively a male preserve.



Shoedhoni fishers, Andhra Pradesh, India. Photo credit: Prasad (ICM).

Thus, in the last few decades, the diverse roles and significant contributions of women to the fishing and aquaculture sector have been revealed much more clearly. At the same time, we need to take stock of their status in contemporary fisheries, globally. For this issue, therefore, Yemaya asked several well-known gender experts in fisheries and aquaculture to reflect on the decadal changes that they feel have taken place both in their countries and globally. The key questions asked included whether the discourse now explicitly recognises women's human and labour rights; whether women are better organized now than before; whether there has been any change in roles and expectations concerning women; what coping mechanisms women have recourse to in developed and developing countries; what kind of policy support exists; and whether, in their opinion, women's empowerment and agency are important

for community development, and what progress, if any, has been made in this regard. A common discussion schedule was sent to experts from across the world who then shared the perspectives from the country or region they represented. The experts included the following:

From India: Nalini Nayak, Trustee, ICSF Trust, and Member, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), India; Shilpa Nandy, Assistant Professor at the Khudiram Bose Central College, Kolkata, India; Jharna Acharya, a member of the women's wing of a fisher's union, the Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum, West Bengal, India; and Sonia George, General Secretary, Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), Kerala, India.

From Brazil: Beatriz Mesquita, Member, ICSF.

From the Caribbean: Maria Pena from the University of the West

Indies (UWI)—Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), Barbados and Peter A. Murray from the Secretariat of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, Belize City, Belize. Both Maria Pena and Peter Murray are members of the UWI-CERMES led Gender in Fisheries Team (GIFT).

From Nigeria: Kafayat Fakoya, Senior Lecturer, Department of Fisheries, Faculty of Science, Lagos State University, Nigeria.

From the European Union: Katia Frangoudes, Researcher, University of Brest, UMR AMURE, France; Alicia Said (alicia.said87@gmail.com).

From Norway: Siri Gerrard, Centre for Women and Gender Research, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway.



Women seaweed collector, Gulf of Mannar, Tamil Nadu, India.
Photo Credit: Shilpi Sharma, ICSF.

From France: Marie Christine Montford, Treasurer, Executive Committee, The International Organization for Women in the Seafood Industry (WSI).

From Australia: Meryl J Williams, Chair and Coordinator, Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section (GAFS) of the Asian Fisheries Society, Australia, who gave a global overview on the questions posed.

Many of the experts speak of the limited opportunities that women have for economic and social mobility in their lives. Such opportunities seem to depend on the type of activity women are engaged in. Increased mobility may end up adding responsibilities, primarily in the form of unpaid labour, though in some countries, women in fisheries may also have the opportunity of entering large scale trading or auctioning of fish or becoming boat owners. Change affects various levels in society – social, economic and environmental. When opportunities open up at one level, at another level, they may shrink. Thus,

women have had to deal with loss of access to their traditional resources and livelihood options. Commercial interests and large investors have taken away fish selling and marketing opportunities from women. At the environmental level, strategies for climate change do not adequately address gender concerns and skew the playing field against women.

The responses from all the experts testify to the fact that women in fisheries all over the world are getting better organized. An example is that of the European network, AKTEA – an umbrella of fisherwomen organizations in Europe, established in 2006 by women organizations from different countries – which has successfully spearheaded activities promoting women’s claims and rights, and defended the fisheries and fisheries communities. Some respondents felt that today men and women enjoy the same legal protection for their employment and working conditions; that there are more cases today of women heading fishers’ organizations and being in leadership roles. However, it also seems to be the case that in most parts of the world, organizational skills and resources are lacking in fisherwomen’s organizations.

The discussants concur that legal instruments and policies are often gender blind. For women, the struggle is usually at the fundamental level for basic recognition as fishers. Further steps leading to greater integration are dependent on this basic recognition. Even if policies recognise gender, they require frameworks for implementation of gender agendas. Another disabling factor is lack of reliable gendered data in the sector that can support policy formulation.



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What is the place of women in fisheries? I think in every country, women have a place in fisheries. The fishers’ way of life includes women’s labour and the involvement of the community. Fisheries is not an individual activity. It should be understood not only as an economic activity but also as an activity that motivates and enables political thinking and action. However, the place and engagement of women in fisheries tends to go unnoticed by men and ignored in public policies.

I live and work in Brazil’s Northeast region, from where I speak. This tropical region produces most of the marine small-scale fisheries in the country. Coastal reef and mangrove ecosystems enable women’s fisheries.

In Brazil, women participate in fisheries activities from the net to the plate. They participate directly in coastal and estuarine shellfish and other types of fisheries; they prepare gear for offshore, mainly male, fisheries; they work in seafood post-harvesting activities, both in artisanal and industrial plants; and in commercial activities. Moreover, women are involved in political fishers’ representation and movements across the country. Within traditional fisheries communities, women have historically played important roles, being

responsible for the continuation of traditional social practices. On the other hand, political representation outside of community life has been more recent, growing from the 1990s till present times.

Women’s work in artisanal fishing is still considered invisible and seen as a marginal activity without prestige in terms of household income and time spent. Women in fisheries, like in other occupations, have a double burden, with housework and child care perceived as women’s responsibility, whereas the role of men is culturally linked to the productive sector alone.

In Brazil there is a complex legal framework that was made to protect women in the fisheries. However, the country faces many political and cultural challenges, which deter the adoption of these human rights within public policies.

Legal instruments for fisheries in Brazil in general lack consideration for gender issues. The National Legal Framework is centered in Law 11.959 (2009), which, in spite of adopting a broad definition of artisanal fishing that includes repairing fishing gear and boats, and post-harvest activities, does not consider the role of gender in other matters. In 2019, Congress approved other legislative gender considerations in addition to this

law. Very recently, fisherwomen had to resist changes in the law that would have stopped recognising them as fishers, unless they had a fisher family.

An important policy for women is the National Policy on the Sustainable Development of Traditional Peoples and Communities (Federal Decree No. 6040/2007). It recognises women fishers, strengthening and guaranteeing their rights to their identity, and to their organizations and institutions. There was a commission to implement this policy, but it has been withdrawn by the current government.

Women in fisheries, as do men, have sector-specific social security benefits: retirement at 55 years of age, which is five years less than other categories of work, and less payment per month towards the pension fund than other professionals, a fee based on the produce sold. Other benefits are similar to those of other categories of work: assistance when incapable of working and maternity leave.

The recognition of occupational health of fisher women is a demand that has been implemented in the public health system, albeit very slowly in some states, after enormous pressure from social movements.

Fisher women movements used to participate in councils. However, the current government ended all the federal public administration's participatory management councils, established by decree, such as the National Council of the Traditional Peoples and Communities.

This deficient mandate of fisheries management institutions at the federal level has been a problem in the country, causing instability in the public structures governing fisheries. None of the recent official institutions have paid attention to gender in fisheries and many are now defunct (see Table 1). Until 2012, fisheries data production was not disaggregated by gender, there were many projects underway across the country that testified to

women's importance in the fisheries. Today, things have come to such a pass that Brazil does not know what, how and by whom its seafood is being produced. The last figures in the Registry of Fishing Activity demonstrated that women were 50 per cent of the registered fishers.

Historical changes in fisheries management structures in the Brazilian Federal Government.

Fisheries management structure	Period
Ministry of Agriculture	1933–1962
Superintendence for the Development of Fisheries	1962–1989
Ministry of the Environment	1989–1998
Ministry of Agriculture	1998–2003
Special Secretary of Aquaculture and Fisheries	2003–2009
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture	2009–2016
Ministry of Agriculture	2016–2017
Ministry of Industry, Foreign Trade and Services	2017–2018
Ministry of Agriculture	2018- until now

In the last 20 years, fishers in Brazil have been better organized and women have followed this movement. The first movement to discuss gender in fisheries began with the Catholic Church in the 1970s, in the Northeast region in the state of Pernambuco. In the 80s, fisherwomen began to be recognised by the state and came to be called shellfish gatherers, a denomination used until present times in most narratives: political, in the community, in management and in research. The women fisheries social movements have been discussing and challenging this denomination since the term fisherwoman would place women more readily on a similar level as men.

In 1989, Joana Mousinho was became the first fisherwoman in Brazil to be elected president of a fisher colony in Itapissuma, Pernambuco. The colonies are representative institutions created by the navy since 1919. At that time, fishermen were obliged to affiliate to their territory colony in order to be allowed to fish. Only after 1988, with the last Brazilian federal constitution, did these

entities become comparable to trade unions and fishers' colonies were designated as labour unions, with social benefits. Presently, in the Northeast region, women are the majority in every colony management group, changing in the last 20 years the character of fisher representation in the region.

This change was possible after the democratisation of Brazil, when civil society and government institutions developed projects, and introduced capacity building and participation



Fisherwomen engaged in post-harvest fisheries, Brazil. Photo credit: Naina Pierri.

policies. In 2004, the first National Fishing Conference brought the majority of the national fisher representatives together in the Brazilian capital to construct public policies for the fisheries. There, women claimed their place and demanded an exclusive meeting. As a result, the Articulation of National Fisheries (ANP) was founded. Today there is one more women's movement: the Fisherwomen Network. Women enhance men's fishery discussion and demands, from production to community life, occupational safety and health, environment, education and human rights. It became possible for many women to acquire a professional fishers' licence as a result of the organizing efforts of women fishers, and started to work on policy formulation.

Despite all this hard work and investment, challenges have significantly increased with the

repression of progressive fisheries policies and actions in the country since the political changes of 2017, with the new right-wing government disregarding artisanal fishing policies. Today, there is no participation of women (or fishermen) in the formulation of fishery policies and the Ministry of Fisheries has been done away with. Also, the registration of new fishers has been stopped since 2013 and no fishing statistics have been published since 2012. Civil society is however fighting back to protect and regain their hard-won rights.

In addition to the political challenge, fisherwomen suffer from a series of urgent problems, such as lack of equipment and boats, health problems, double work hours and problems due to environmental degradation. Some of the causes for these problems are the harmful practices of large enterprises, such as oil and gas platforms, territory disputes with companies and rural producers, pollution, and the consequences of illegal fishing such as overfishing by industrial boats.

Last year, in 2019, Brazil fishers suffered from impacts of the collapse of the Brumadinho Dam and the oil spill along a large part of the Brazilian coast, which were both major environmental crimes.

Currently, the country is immersed in the current coronavirus pandemic. All these events have ushered negative effects into women's lives with no effective responses forthcoming from the Brazilian government.

It is of utmost importance that policy makers recognise the diverse roles and perspectives of women in fisheries in order to achieve equitable outcomes and sustainable livelihood goals.



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International discourse explicitly recognises women's human and labour rights. Some countries also have policies affirming these rights for women. However, the major challenge lies with the level of preparedness to 'walking the talk', to implement the policies and regulations. Also, women need to understand the importance and power of their rights, and defend them in the face of overbearing customary and social norms which push them into positions subordinate to those of men in their community. The process of this understanding is transformational. Men too need to undergo the same transformative process to understand and embrace the need to respect women's rights. They must not perceive women's rights as a threat to their masculinity or to extant customs.

Women today are better organized at the international and national levels to represent their rights. However, the question remains: are the women representatives actually representing all women or just a segment of the women? Even among women, there are economic and social inequalities which tend to discriminate or segregate them. Women representatives often do not connect with rural women or women of lower educational and income status. Gender and women issues at the grassroots levels are best projected by women familiar with the issues of those affected. I would

describe women as better organized if and when they truly represent all strata or classes of women.

In today's context women are much more mobile, playing multiple roles as fishers, fish farmers, traders, wage labourers and so on. Increased mobility and participation in multiple activities however have not resulted in increased wages and incomes or gender equality. Further, women forced into multiple roles are also vulnerable to physical exhaustion and occupational hazards. The multiple roles are often not a matter of choice, but of compulsion, brought about by decline in artisanal fisheries.

The small-scale fisheries sector is faced with resource decline, resulting in poverty and food insecurity in fishing communities. There are many causes for this resource decline. They include: changes in the dynamics of resource use and productivity with modern fishing; illegal fishing and fishing practices; widespread and competing uses within and outside the aquatic environment; impacts of international and national macro-economic policies; and the occurrences of natural disasters induced by climatic changes. The underlying cause for this is weak governance structures, characterised by poor stakeholder participation, poor monitoring and enforcement capabilities, and weak institutional norms.

The advent of western-styled and centralised fisheries management has weakened governance of the small-scale fisheries sector. For instance, many traditional fisheries operate open-access regimes mediated by age-old customary norms and communal ownership. However, the influence of traditional management systems has been on a decline. Conflicting lifestyles, investment drives in fishing, and divergent interests of fishers threaten collective social capital and social norms in many communities. This induces passivity among fishers towards sustainability and stewardship of the exploited fish stock. The outcome is a spiraling state of decline in fisheries resources, forcing communities into adaptive strategies.

The adaptive strategies are shaped by the circumstances people find themselves in and the options or resources available to them. They differ among and within communities, based on education, income, gender, economic and social status. Therefore, gender and context informed analyses are important in unravelling coping mechanisms of women and men along the value chains. Some fishers adapt to migrate with the fishery resources, albeit at a higher cost using large canoes and outboard engines to travel long distances to productive fishing grounds. Other fishers who cannot mobilise productive assets embrace changes in time commitment to short fishing trips and diversification into non-fishing livelihoods.

Climate change impacts put further strain on limited resources and settlements and threaten the livelihoods of people living in low-lying coastal zones. Many fishing households exhibit low awareness of adaptation strategies with climate change and variability which affects their livelihoods. The low adaptive capacity of the people is due to lack of household wealth and low access to credit, social networks, education and technology. Women and children are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Women in fishing communities depend almost entirely on fish to support themselves and their family's basic needs. Adaptive strategies to climate change vulnerabilities are often gendered. Majority of women have fewer options than men, and

experience a double burden in their absence. Migration to neighbouring communities is often a preferred adaptive option, with fishers engaging in multiple activities, including hiring as farm labour, fishing in new areas, engaging in palm fruit harvesting, firewood marketing, and delivering fresh water with their boats to distant fishing communities. Compared to men, women are forced to engage in multiple income-generating activities. Some women even engage in sex-for-fish for preferential access to fish supplies.

Many countries still lack enabling policy and legislative frameworks inclusive of fishers, fish workers and fishing communities. At the global level, small-scale fisheries are supported by the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs also have a gender equity focus. Unfortunately, SDG14.b, which specifically deals with small-scale fishers' access to productive resources, services and markets, lacks a gender component. Further, with SDG 14.b, implementation levels remain low in many countries.

In Africa, a Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture was developed in 2014 with the objective to improve and strengthen the contribution of small-scale fisheries to poverty alleviation, food, and nutrition security and socio-economic growth, especially for the fishing communities. The framework has a gender component that supports promotion of women in fisheries trade, and measures benefits accruing to women as a performance indicator in the implementation of a 10-year Action Plan at the regional and national levels. The Pan Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Framework and Reform Strategy: Gender and Youth in Fisheries and Aquaculture recommends: effective participation of women and youth in decision making processes; gendered value-chain analysis to define support mechanisms required to improve productivity and working conditions for women; mainstreaming of gender and youth into policy; laws and development plans based on collection and analysis of disaggregated gender data; long-term



Fishing provides direct and indirect employment to over six million people in Nigeria.
Photo credit: B. B. Solarin.

commitment of funding to improve empowerment in the post-harvest sector and women's equal participation in planning and managing of 'mainstream' fisheries activities; the promotion of inter-sectorial approaches and partnerships focusing on formal and non-formal education and improving access to finance and health services; and the prevention of gender based violence, and design and implement policy responsive to the underlying causes.

However, many national fisheries policies are still gender-blind. Interventions targeting women's empowerment in small-scale fisheries have focused on supporting women through post-harvest and household activities. These are aligned with the perception that women's needs arise from their roles as fish processors and caregivers. The understanding is that women should remain in the socially acceptable female domain of the household and in the perceived traditional roles. Actions to strengthen gender equity and enable women to participate in fisheries decision processes

are seldom included. In sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, women are underrepresented on fisheries management committees. This makes it difficult to ensure that women have equal access to fisheries, which, in turn, impacts the health and welfare of all community members.

A lot of uncertainty surrounds employment data of women in small-scale fisheries and their activities in the value-chains. At global and national levels, only guess estimates of women's employment are available due to the scarcity or absence of gender-disaggregated data. In many small-scale fisheries, catch statistics are not gender-disaggregated. The many roles that women undertake in the value-chains are underrated and their economic contribution trivialized, with negative consequences for fisheries policy and management as well as for the national economy. In this context, an FAO project funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and focusing on women from Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, and Uganda involved in

the small-scale fisheries, is of interest. The project proposes to develop guidance on best practices for the future. Mapping and gender analysis within the value chain will recommend the best ways for women to be empowered, including help in decision making and leadership, joining or establishing organizations, networks, and platforms relevant to their needs and their work.

Tracking the progress of the impact of women on community development is not a straight or clear-cut process. Rather, the extent of progress attained is context specific, variable, and shaped by prevailing gendered social and cultural norms, the technology used or the extent of commercialisation of the fish product. These limit the empowerment of women and their degree of participation. Cultural settings in most fishing communities promote patriarchy at household level and restrictive gendered norms in fishing. Improved fishing technology and industrial fisheries in near-shore waters competes with small-scale fisheries for declining fish stocks and render less fish available for women fishers and their communities.

Low availability and access to fish within communities implies that the economic base of the women is gradually eroding and only those who were established early, before industrialisation, will continue to thrive by leveraging the social capital they have built over the years. Unfortunately, such women are few and often elderly, while younger women with no strong financial base or family support, struggle to make ends meet.

In Africa, women predominate the post-harvest sector but have differential access to economic and social capital. At the hierarchy of the female-centric supply chains are a relatively small group of entrepreneurial women known as 'fish mummies'. By virtue of their successes individually and collectively in their gender-defined roles as large-scale fish processors, wholesalers and distributors of fresh/dried fish, fish mummies have carved a niche for themselves as wealthy and influential elites in the socio-economic and political spheres often beyond their communities. Their control of the fish trade, through rights to huge parts of the catch from fishing expeditions they finance or as canoe owners, empowers them with

some influence and potential leverage in the traditionally androcentric domain of fisheries management.

Along the coast of West Africa, women have stood out tall in the small-scale fishing sector. Many lead vibrant women's organizations and represent the voices of their communities. From Senegal, The Gambia to Liberia and Ghana women such as Maimouna Sabaly and Fatou Samba are at the frontline mobilising other women to fight for access to food security, livelihood, a healthy sea, and basic human rights. In Senegal, women are agitating for the Government to put an end to the expansion of giant fishmeal and fish oil industry that is decimating local fish stocks and putting in jeopardy over 40 million people who depend on these resources.

The story of women oyster harvesters in The Gambia is particularly inspiring. Generally, the gleaning of shellfish in coastal wetlands is predominantly done by women who decide how to harvest, process, and market the product. Under the auspices of TRY Oyster Women's Association, some 500 women clustered into cooperatives participated in local mangroves reforestation and educational outreach to the local population on the benefits of environmentally responsible resource management. Their activities were instrumental to the approval of a Cockle and Oyster Co-Management Plan for the Tanbi-Wetlands National Park. This is the first time ever in Sub-Saharan Africa that a women's group has been granted exclusive rights to use and manage fisheries. Such success stories can sow the seeds for other experiments of cooperative women's enterprises in fisheries.



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The European Union (EU) legal framework recognises women's contribution in fisheries in various directives and regulations. For example, the EU regulation No. 508/2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) recognises the importance of women's contribution to the local communities and provides, for example, the opportunity for women to access EU subsidies to develop new activities. In practice, these provisions are decided at Member State level, and thus, their implementation is determined by the priorities of each EU Member State. Spain seems to be at the forefront of promoting gender equality in fisheries, dedicating a large proportion of EMFF funding to women's economic agency. Thanks to EMFF or EFF, Spanish women in fisheries have been able to develop entrepreneurship and find new jobs such as shellfish gathering or net mending.

In all Member States, employment and working conditions for men and women working onboard



fishing vessels, and gathering shellfish and seaweed on foot, enjoy the same legal recognition. Some of the women in these sub-sectors occupy lead roles in fishers' organizations and are engaged in fisheries management and decision making. However, compared to their male counterparts, very few are in top roles, probably since they have multiple tasks to deal with, which prevents them from taking leading positions in organizations.

In the past ten years, more women engaged in small-scale fisheries family enterprises became the

managers of these enterprises with some participating in seasonal fish harvesting with their partners. Some of the women earn a salary while others do not, and such realities remain under the radar of national and European authorities responsible for work and employment affairs.

In 2019, the European Union produced the first sex-disaggregated statistics on fisheries employment. According to this data, women represent 3.78 per cent of the total employment in fisheries harvesting. However, these figures are unrealistic and incomplete as they don't include shore based activities such as shellfish and seaweed gathering.

Although women involved in fish harvesting onboard fishing vessels have access to the same rights as men, it is not the same case for women assisting their husbands, fathers and brothers in the family enterprise or providing a helping hand part-time in high-season fish harvesting onboard fishing vessels. The 2010/41/EU Directive recognises the unpaid contributions of women only for assisting spouses or partners, and provides women retirement pension and maternity leave. This directive is mandatory and legally binding; however, very few countries have applied it in their national legislations. France, Croatia and Slovenia are a few of the countries where this directive is effectively implemented even though it is fully transposed by all Member States. Women's unpaid contribution is not included in the EU employment statistics. Moreover, women's share in fish harvesting estimated at 3.78 per cent, as mentioned earlier, does not reflect this contribution but only represents fishermen or fisherwomen working on small-scale fisheries vessels that don't employ crew. In the context, forthcoming discussions in 2020 will focus on trying to get data pertaining to spouses or partners assisting the family enterprise included in the next round of data collection on EU-level employment data in 2021.

Regarding the inclusion of women's rights in the dominant discourse, we can learn from the experience of AKTEA. The European network



Catherine Gueho, A seaweed harvester, France.
Photo credit: Franka Macovac.

AKTEA, which is an umbrella of fisherwomen's organizations in Europe, was established in 2006 by women's Organizations from different countries with the aim of promoting women's claims and rights and defending fisheries and fishing communities. AKTEA lobbied at the EU level for the revision of the EU directive related to the recognition of spouses and partners who assisted in the fishing enterprise, which was then incorporated in the Directive 2010/41/ UE. The network also lobbied to include gender indicators in the EMFF post evaluation, for a better picture of the percentage of the fisheries funds dedicated to gender equality.

Further, gender-related claims, such as participation in the advisory councils, were made in the past five years in events of the European Commission and Parliament at the EU-level at various levels – by the General Fisheries Committee of Mediterranean/FAO (GFCM) at the regional level, through speeches advocating for women rights, and through AKTEA-produced



lobbying material. These proved to be extremely effective modes of intervention. For example, the speech given in Malta during a round table organized by the EU Commissionaire of fisheries resulted in a study in 2019 on the role women in fisheries in Mediterranean and Black Sea. A speech by AKTEA on 8 March 2018, at DG MARE, resulted in the commissioning of a technical report ‘FLAG Support to Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture’.

AKTEA also participated in different events organized by national authorities and women’s organizations such as the International Conference of Women in Fisheries organized by the Spanish government, and a meeting organized in Conil, Spain, in October 2019 by the Andalusian women in fisheries association to foster new connections with Moroccan and Senegalese women in fisheries.

During the same period and despite the presence of AKTEA at the international level, the network faced internal difficulties. These difficulties were similar to those faced by national women Organizations, which were the pillars of the network. One of the difficulties was that existing members were getting older and new membership among youth was not forthcoming. The problem was compounded by the fact that women were increasingly taking up other jobs outside fisheries that further reduced their time availability.

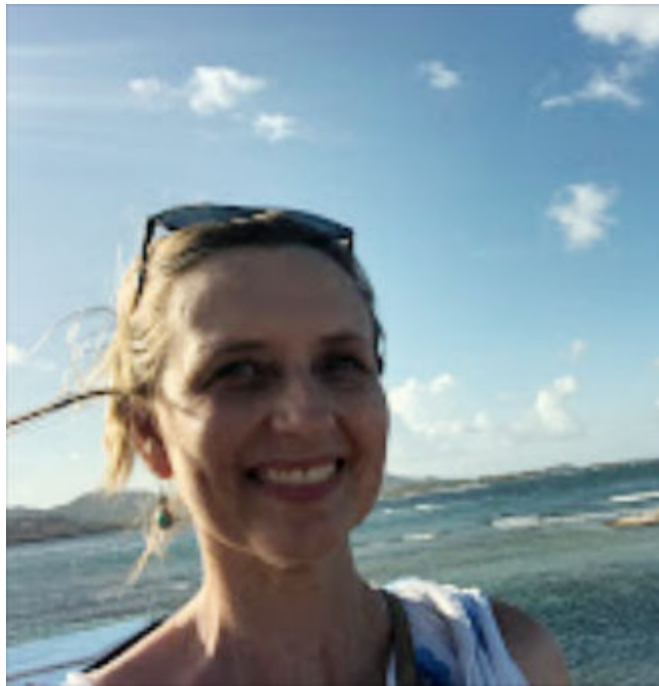
The second and equally worrying issue concerns the lack of finances. Women’s organizations don’t have the same support as professional male organizations do and many of them are run on volunteer basis. This is not enough to maintain a Europe-wide women’s organization. Language fluency is an added difficulty, as AKTEA members hailing from different countries are not always able to speak each other’s languages, and thus direct exchanges are difficult without the support of bilingual or multilingual speakers. Despite these

challenges and the fact that AKTEA’s activity has been dwindling in the last years, 2020 was perceived as an opportune year to revive the network again for a new decade (see the article ‘Revive, Renew and Re-launch!’ in this issue of Yemaya).

Regarding new opportunities for mobility and empowerment available to women in fisheries today, the support given by EMFF to the development of fisheries communities (Fisheries Local Action Groups) offered possibilities for women to initiate new economic activities. Through this funding, women are being able to develop activities related to various domains, including fish processing, fish retail, recycling and upscaling fishing material, such as nets, to produce bags or jewellery. Through novel ideas, these funds are giving women the opportunity to develop new skills which are not necessarily linked to their spouses’ businesses. There are many different examples of women-run enterprises in tourism, food and fisheries throughout Europe. These are creating new job opportunities within fishing communities, and provide an extra income to fisheries households. Such diversification boosts women’s roles and well-being. They would provide exciting opportunities to facilitate the exchange of local practices across EU countries and beyond. However, it remains difficult for AKTEA to provide this platform due to financial and human capacity constraints.

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Facing page:
Eufemia Faruggia preparing fillets for Malta festival.
Photo credit: Alicia Said.



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Addressing the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) requires understanding gender and the different roles and rights of women and men in small-scale fisheries, seeking to achieve responsible fisheries and sustainable development through a gender lens, and ensuring an enabling environment for gender equality with supportive implementation. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) which comprises 15 countries, The Member States of the inter-governmental regional fisheries organization, the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) recognises that an essential component of institutional enhancement is comprehensive

mainstreaming of gender and decent work by including vulnerable groups and gender considerations in the plans, programmes, projects, and administration of the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Gender (which includes men and masculinity) is included in understanding fisherfolk knowledge and practices. Consistent with international obligations, CRFM Member States infuse decent work into policy frameworks and instruments. Due to the cross-cutting nature of these issues, and the implications for the human rights of women, men, boys and girls in the Caribbean Community, they are linked in varying degrees to regional treaties including the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP).



Women processing white sea urchin roe for sale. The annual fishing season, locally known as sea eggs, is important socio-economically to hundreds of Barbadians. Photo credit: Maria Pena.

With stalwart developmental policies and investments across the Caribbean Community during the past half-century, the region is thought to be well ahead in attaining gender equity and equality in fisheries and aquaculture as, within CRFM Member States, women and men generally have equal access to work and other opportunities. Yet, there is still inequality contributed to by gender-based violence; and labour force participation is sometimes not commensurate with women's educational attainment, which tends to be higher than men's in many Caribbean states.

To answer the question of whether women are better organized now as compared to earlier times, in the Caribbean there is no time series of sex-disaggregated data to definitively answer if collective action among women has improved.

Women are involved in fisherfolk associations, groups and cooperatives. Anecdotal information suggests there are now more women in leadership positions, fully accepted as leaders, and more attentive to the fishing industry at the national and international levels. However, the extent to which they are shaping fisheries policies to respond to women's issues in the fishing industry and mobilising communities to participate in fisheries planning and management in the region, is largely unknown but now being investigated. Some women from the fishing industry in the region, holding influential positions regionally and internationally, are strategically positioned to ensure that women and men in fisheries can be involved in and can influence decision making. Vernel Nicholls from Barbados as Chairperson of the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk



Fisherwomen boning and filleting flying fish, Bridgetown, Barbados. Photo credit: Maria Pena.

which sex-disaggregated data on leaders are recorded, 45 are led by men and only three by women. The latter include the Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organizations (BARNUFO), the St. Kitts Nevis National Fisherfolk Organization and the Fish Vendors Cooperative, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Generally, representation of women on fisherfolk organizations or cooperative boards is surpassed by men six times over – 236 male board members versus 40 female board members for 44 of the organizations across the same 12 countries for which sex-disaggregated data are recorded. In some countries in the region, for example Guyana and Belize, there are no women holding board positions.

In general, women in fisheries in the region are being more attentive to regional and international fisheries issues and have keen interest to participate in local forums, learning exchanges and international meetings and conferences about fisheries. Read more about the Caribbean ‘fisherwoman’ field trip learning

exchange between women from Caribbean countries and Costa Rica; the Belize Women in Fisheries Forum; and the Women in Fisheries Forum in Barbados.

Caribbean women typically seem to feel and be less constrained by matters such as education, culture, and finance than women in many other parts of the world in terms of participating and being accepted in various activities in the fishing industry. While there is gendered division of labour along the fisheries value chain, it is mostly by free choice due to economic rationale. For example, in Barbados, differences in occupations by gender along the fisheries value chain are not seen as inequalities. Fixes for the Barbados fisheries sector, are not viewed as being gender related but rather are more institutional and operational in nature

Organizations (CNFO) and Nadine Nembhard from Belize, Co-chair World Forum on Fisher Peoples, are two such examples.

Situations differ by country. Most fisherfolk organizations are dominated by male boat owners and fishermen. In many cases women in the industry are unwelcome, not because of gender per se, but because they are fish vendors with whom the harvest sector often has fish price conflicts. Male dominance in fisherfolk organizations is confirmed by CNFO database records. The CNFO database records 131 fisherfolk organizations across 16 countries. Of 48 organizations across twelve countries (Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname) for

for both sexes and include improved working standards.

Trends in gendered divisions of labour are changing. Women, for example, in the Barbados and Belize fishing sectors, are now more interested in entering non-traditional roles. This growing trend has been attributed to women observing their mothers and female relatives assuming non-traditional gendered roles as well as motivation from parents for their children to try new roles. Such pursuit, however, comes at a social cost for women. Women fishers in Barbados are often ridiculed, particularly by other women, for what is seen to be delinquency in caregiving responsibilities to pursue a role in the harvest sector that may take a woman away from her family for up to two weeks at a time per month during the fishing season.

The periodic massive sargassum seaweed influxes that have impacted the eastern Caribbean illustrate how women in the fishing industry cope with marine environmental hazards. The post-harvest sector responds in the short-term to decreased fishing effort, decreased fish catch, alternative species, changes in seasonality, increased abundance of juvenile fishes, increased prices due to fish scarcity and changes in consumer buying patterns due to massive influxes of sargassum. The fishery sector has mainly employed short-term coping mechanisms, rather than long-term adaptive ones. Fisherfolk have typically sustained their livelihoods by diversification. For example, women small-scale fish processors in Barbados may supplement their income during the fishing off-season with part-time jobs as receptionists, cleaners, security guards etc., or sell fish that had been stored during the fishing season.

An estimated 160,000 persons, particularly women, are employed indirectly in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in the CARICOM region in fish processing, marketing and distribution or selling of fish and fish products, ancillary (support) services such as ice production and supply, research, development and management. Within the region, women’s participation in fisheries has been rated as ‘high’ for marketing and processing,

‘medium’ for investing and ‘low’ for fishing. Despite the limited data on women’s work in the fisheries sector, their contribution to the blue economy may be significant.

These factors as well as regional gender indicators on labour force participation, employment rates, and gender segregation of occupations, have led the Ministerial Council of the CRFM to: adopt a Protocol on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries for Caribbean Community fisherfolk and societies under the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (the Protocol incorporates the SSF Guidelines into the Policy, and by extension Chapter 8 of the guidelines, on gender equality) and agreement that it should enter into force immediately; endorse a Protocol on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management in Fisheries and Aquaculture under the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy that addresses disaster risks and climate change as presented in Section 9 of the SSF Guidelines; and issued an overarching statement on gender, youth and decent work, to wit: “The Council accepted that international and national norms regarding issues pertaining to gender, youth, and decent work be adhered to, and be incorporated into all CRFM policies, protocols, programmes, and plans.”

These decisions show a clear regional recognition of the need to consider gendered human rights, labour rights, environmental and social impacts in managing the fisheries of the Caribbean Community.



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I will reply to Yemaya's questions with a focus on France, the country I know the best.

My observations about France are that there are only a handful of local associations of women in the fishing industry and none in aquaculture, to my knowledge. At one time, these associations were in most cases run by fishermen's wives and focused on their husbands' rights as fishers and on their own rights as fishers' spouses.

Today, these associations have nearly all disappeared. Run as voluntary efforts, these organizations had neither the financial nor the human means to pursue their fight.

A few years ago, when the European Union was introducing its latest fishing plan, they wanted to meet and engage women's associations. They did not find any!

In France, the careful inventory of quantitative data disaggregated by sex has shown that quality data does exist, at least for the main sectors. The problem is not so much the lack of data as their fragmented and dispersed nature. Dedicated resources for processing and analysing existing data would make it possible to standardise information and discussion on the sensitive subject of gender equality, improve stakeholders' understanding, and reduce resistance to the idea of gender equality. Public statistics reveal a high wage gap between women and men in certain sectors, more than 20 per cent in the case of both fish wholesalers and retailers.

The inequalities that the data point to are still unknown, poorly accepted, or even denied.



Facing page: A woman selling smoked fish at Lorient market.
Photo credit: Alain Le Sann



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Our discourse does not explicitly recognise women's human rights and labour rights. Until the global apex body discussing fisheries and aquaculture, the FAO Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (COFI), puts these issues firmly on its agenda, we cannot say that the discourse recognises these issues. Some say the impetus for putting women's rights on the agenda of COFI has to come from the countries, but in fact this matter can be suggested and reasoned also from the FAO and external partners. In COFI, in the early 2000s, the small-scale fisheries discourse began encouraged by the then Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR), supported by internal FAO work and encouraged by grassroots movements, such as ICSF. We don't have, unfortunately, a parallel with gender equality. ACFR no longer meets, FAO's capacity on gender and fisheries is low, and women's grassroots movements are very small, new and under resourced. National agencies give the gender elements of the SSF Guidelines little attention.

Women are becoming better Organized and more women's Organizations are being created. Many, however, are small and still struggle to gain traction. Creating and maintaining a formal Organization requires leadership, resources, persistence, purpose and vision, the ability of

membership and leadership to articulate their cause, and reach to the policy and decision makers. Women's and gender equality groups are weak in all these areas. Nalini Nayak and Cornelia Quist and ICSF colleagues described this well when they said that the gender equality movements in small scale fisheries were a "struggle within a struggle". Other national and international Organizations are not attentive, or they need constant reminding that they promised to attend to gender equality when they signed onto key agreements such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

What are the effects on women of increased mobility and labour participation? For each woman, the effects will depend on who she is, where she is and what she does. Is she mobile and participating because she has migrated in-country or across a border for the work? If so, she may find the work physically arduous and poorly paid, but it may be a ticket to becoming more independent, and even escaping the strictures and limitations of life in, for example, a poor rural farming area. If she is a fish trader in the market, she may relish the position but still fear that she and her fellow traders will be squeezed out when the city privatises the market and lets new leases on the stalls to bigger operators with more capital. If she has developed skills and contacts in a burgeoning node such as fish farming or selling in a new site, she may be on her way to become an entrepreneur,



Fishlanding centre, Cote D' Ivoire.
Photo credit: Jackie Sunde.

maybe working with her husband, helping educate their children as they support their aging extended family.

Are major changes taking place in the development of coping mechanisms in fisheries? No, major change is not happening, but, in certain fisheries, gradual change is. However, I am more concerned that positive change is being far outweighed by negative change for women. The fish value-chains, at least until the coronavirus pandemic, were increasingly stretched, focused on exports, products with large volumes (e.g. pangasius catfish) and/or high values (e.g. shrimp) under the control of bigger and bigger corporations and marketing authorities, often aided by government agencies providing trade, marketing, biosecurity and research support. Intensification, aggregation and trade have been trends that have disadvantaged women already working in small- and medium-scale fisheries and trade operations and, in return, created only low paying labour for women in processing. Since most countries are gender-blind in their fisheries approaches, most of the changes that disadvantage women go unnoticed, unless women speak up. A good example of this has been the recent efforts in Senegal and Ghana where women have protested the loss of fish they currently process and sell to

companies under foreign fishing agreements.

Even during the change due to the coronavirus emergency, women are likely to be big losers. Factory workers are losing their jobs, and women in intermediary work are less likely to receive government support than the "frontline" licensed fishers and the factory owners.

In terms of legislative, policy and data support, gender-blindness in fisheries is accompanied

by generally poor data on women's work. Fisheries agencies from the local to national and international keep reasonable records of the number of workers in fishing. Although most countries do not record the numbers of women in the workforce, from many small studies we know approximately what these numbers might be. What we lack, however, are any statistics and time trends on workers, especially women workers, in the other nodes of the value chain. The responsibility for collecting these data rests in other ministries and international agencies that rarely record numbers from fisheries, except in aggregate with other sectors, such as agriculture and forestry.

Policy progress remains slow. When mentioned, women are often referred to in policies for welfare assistance, immediately assigning them to lesser and marginal activities. Internationally, the 1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. While a much-loved and admirable instrument that has spawned many important streams of fisheries legislation and action, the Code remains resolutely gender-blind. The Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) Guidelines does incorporate gender equality principles but implementation of the gender elements are struggling for recognition and

resources within the overall struggle for SSF attention.

What progress has been made in terms of empowerment and agency of women? Empowerment, agency and resistance are all interlinked. Treating them separately can risk thinking that women alone can change their own circumstances, and that changes in their agency or power will not potentially provoke a backlash at critical points.



Women fishsmokers, Guinea Konakry. Photo credit: Beatrice Gorez, CFFA.

Backlash seems more prevalent than in the past, possibly reflecting that some progress is being made and being noticed, hence it is generating resistance in some quarters. In society at large, the United Nations Development Programme recently reported that, in recent years, the gender inequality index, which had been declining, has plateaued. Underlying this performance measure, their surveys found that 91 per cent of men and 86 per cent of women displayed one or more biases against gender equality in politics, economics, education, intimate partner violence and women's reproductive rights.

Infusing fisheries education with the concepts of gender equality may help, but achieving this is not easy. Tertiary educators at our GAF7 Conference in

late 2018 reported that, in India, Japan, Philippines and Thailand, efforts to mainstream gender in fisheries education had met with passive, active, and hidden resistance from colleagues and/or administration.

I believe it is necessary now to think ahead on how to address backlash before it becomes more severe. One suggestion comes from research institutions experimenting with gender transformative approaches. They found that backlash to innovations to help women could be reduced if the women and men were engaged together in the change process.

Finally, I would like to share a reflection based on being engaged for 25 years in women/gender in fisheries and aquaculture research. This is that my colleagues and I tended to go through several stages in our journey. We started with noticing that the default assumption is made that fisheries is only for men. We then sought to correct this by researching where women are active, and what they contribute. We then broadened the discussion by looking at gender norms and relations, recognising the complexities of different women in different fisheries, roles and levels of income. We tried to make the case to decision makers for why gender matters. Finally, we are expanding our horizons by finding the critical links to the major sectoral issues, such as modernisation, scaling up of corporations and trade, environmental degradation and climate change, many of which effectively remove women from their places in fisheries, or offer them exploitative new roles of little power. I suspect that a similar journey still needs to be made by the mainstream decision makers in fisheries, but we still lack the key motivations that would get them to take their first steps.



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In India, women are certainly much better organized in some coastal states. There is no data on the actual number of organizations around the country. The nature of organizations also varies—there are some registered trade unions, some

associations, and a number of SHGs (self-help groups) in the inland sector. Most of these organizations take up issues only up to the state level. Indian states are very large, and languages across states differ; so it is difficult to develop dialogues between states and at the national level.

Women doing fish drying, Gujarat, India. Photo credit: ICSF



As far as the discourse on gender and fisheries is concerned, here again there are considerable differences among Organizations depending on the state under consideration. For instance, in some Indian states like Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa, the general standard of living of the coastal communities is high and the infrastructure of health and education is good and accessible to the majority – although there will always be pockets of more disadvantaged communities. Hence these issues are not very significant.

However these are issues of concern further south on the west coast and all the way up the east coast. There have not been specific attempts by women fisher organizations to address such issues per se. Individual organizations in some areas sometimes take up issues affecting health – like water and sanitation problems, and sometimes preschool programmes – on their advocacy agendas but as far as I know, there is no concerted focus of the larger movement on these subjects.

Access to land for drying fish is one area where women's organizations take up struggles as they are constantly being displaced. Fisheries management issues are less addressed. Rights of women fishworkers in the fish markets and sometimes at landing centres are issues that are taken up, but generally women fishers' Organizations are out of mainstream labour movements.

Mobility has always been a reality for fish vendors, but now they travel further and for longer periods than before as they use various means of transport. Participation has given women vendors greater visibility as a labour sector although they are still not included in the labour rights discourse or recognised as workers by the labour department.

The gradual breaking down of the village community and joint family also means that the social reproduction burden of women increases.

To cope with the changing times, I see women vendors increasingly putting their children in boarding schools as they give value to education while they struggle to earn the money. There is a growing level of indebtedness as women try to meet modern demands of society and their

children. Increasing numbers of vendors buy fish from the wholesale markets where fish is landed at the big landing centres, sometimes a few days journey away from them. Hence the struggle between those who sell good fresh fish and poor frozen fish has become visible.

In terms of legislative and policy support, since a few years, scientists from the technical institutions of government fisheries have been reaching out to women and assisting them to increase income through better practices and value addition. This also has to do with scientists becoming more aware of gender issues. There is improved aggregated data on women in fisheries but data is not available at local levels. There is no specific legislative or policy support for women's employment although there are some fund allocations for women's development.

Moving from empowerment to agency is an important step forward. Not all empowerment leads to agency – if we understand agency as the interest and ability of women to advance their strategic interests. While empowerment certainly helps and has helped women advance their practical interests, on the whole there are only a few women's groups/movements that have been able to advance their strategic interests. Advancing strategic interests is more a collective process, a process of Organizing and advocacy. For instance, there are only a few women's organizations that advocate for reservation of market spaces, for tenure of land for drying fish, for the proper functioning of the Local Complaints Committees to take up issues of sexual harassment at the workplace, etc. This is also because the leadership given from outside the organization membership is also way behind in such conceptualisation and hence the mobilisation does not focus on such issues.

The other factor is that women are still not taken very seriously in the fishworker Organizations and when in their midst the so called 'broader issue' gets the focus.

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Fisherwomen vendors, Gujarat, India.
Photo credit: Neena Koshy

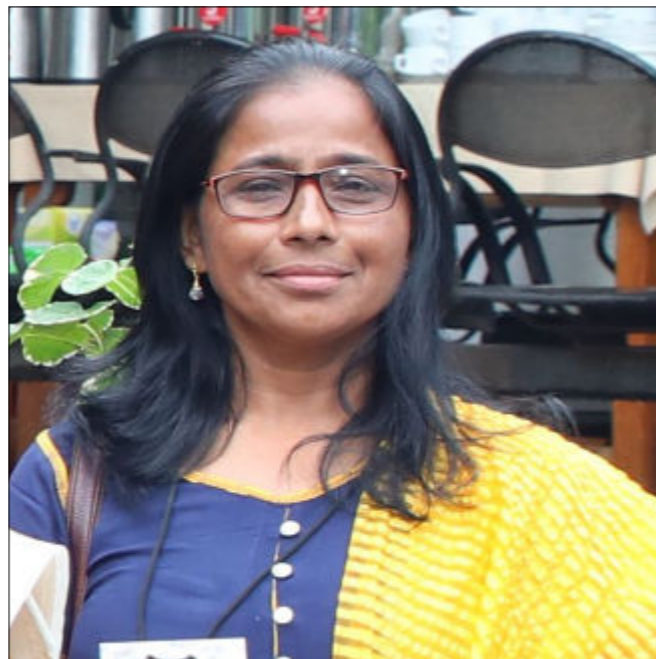
Nakkapalle dryfish market, Andhra Pradesh, India.
Photo credit: Dharmesh Shah



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India's 2017 National Policy on Marine Fisheries (NPMF) and the 2018 Draft National Policy on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture (NIFAP), both provide guidance for mainstreaming gender equity in inland and marine fisheries and aquaculture value chains. In policies and drafts, women's contribution in the fisheries sector in India is being recognised as crucial. However gender mainstreaming fails when the question of implementation and execution comes in.

In 2019, national- and state-level workshops were conducted by the ICSF in collaboration with different fishworkers organizations, NGOs and government departments. Fishworkers from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and West Bengal actively participated in these workshops, where the issues of women fishworkers were discussed at length in the context of several key issues. The context included, first, the issue of human rights, including the right to life with dignity and

recognition of their identity, as well as the different problems of fishers and the engagement of fishers with their respective state governments in fulfilling their demands. Second, it included the question of labour rights – the right to tenure, right to work in better conditions and with proper infrastructure in the marketplace, equal wages, occupational safety, and the provision for health schemes and policies. Third was the question of environmental sustainability, particularly the fact that women's participation should be ensured and supported in resource management and in the sustainability of the sector. Besides, it was felt that



Contai Fish market, East Midnapore, West Bengal, India.
Photo credit: Shilpa Nandy.

women should also be helped to adapt to climate changes, including especially the aftermath of natural disasters like tsunamis and cyclones like Fani, as climate change has serious ramifications upon income, livelihood, health and food security. Finally, the context of the discussions included the social impact. It was pointed out that within communities, the members of fishworkers organizations are actively involved in mobilising the women fishworkers and fishers around their tenure rights, labour rights and women rights. But there are lots of challenges and a lack of straightforward mechanisms to enforce human rights entitlements, and also practical difficulties such as the lack of resources to support and sustain women's struggles.

To answer the question of whether women are better organized today than they were in the past, yes, women are slowly but surely getting organized

all over India. In 2016, a women fishworkers' organization was created in West Bengal and it was named as Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum Women's Wing, which has 11 executive members. This is trying to mobilise women fishers and fishworkers by forming committees at the local, block and district level. It is doing so by holding several meetings, deputations and workshops, organizing the women and making them aware about their rights, and raising their demands with the State Fisheries Minister, Fisheries Department and District Magistrates, and locally, with the village level governance structures – the panchayats. The executive members have represented the forum in different workshops and conferences at national and state levels and expressed their views on gender and women issues.

The participation of women in artisanal fisheries varies from country to country, and takes different



Fish landing centre, Dadanpatrobar, East Midnapore, West Bengal, India. Photo credit: Shilpa Nandy.



Contai Fish market, East Midnapore, West Bengal, India. Photo credit: Shilpa Nandy.

forms. Women participate directly in fishing, and take care of the fishing equipment and other inputs that male fishers use. They participate in many ways in the financing of fishing activities. Women workers in the seafood processing industry are perceived to be trustworthy, meticulous, quality-minded and willing to work for lower wages than men. They are also more vulnerable than men. They are marginalised in planning and policy making, and suffer inequalities and discrimination. However, due to their increased participation and mobilisation, women fishers are making their voices heard. The government is also recognising their identities and focusing on the questions of gender equity and gender mainstreaming.

Traditional skills and techniques used by the fisherfolk are at risk of being replaced by modern unsustainable technologies that damage riverine ecosystems. The success of efforts directed at

restoring inland water resources depends on understanding and recognising the important role that fisherfolk and their traditional knowledge systems can play in coping with the environmental damage.

Attempts are being made to include fisherfolk in inland fisheries restoration activities; document the traditional techniques and skills they practice; restrict the use of modern unsustainable technologies for fishing; encourage the use of traditional methods, incorporating traditional skills and knowledge in current knowledge systems; and address poverty and livelihood issues of fisherfolk.

There are some noteworthy policies and legislations drafted in the fisheries sector at national and international levels, like the SSF Guidelines. The welfare schemes available in India

for the fisherfolk community are various savings cum relief schemes. In the state of West Bengal, no data is available on women's employment and participation in fisheries.

As a result of the Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum's interventions, the state- and district-level authorities extended help to seven women fish vendors in the form of special support which included fish-carrying bicycles and weighing machines. The Fisheries Minister has promised to take into account the priorities of women fishworkers while providing government support to fishing communities.

The progress in organizing has been slow. However, we have spread some awareness among the women fishworkers within the Forum on the need to organize separately. We have still not been able to mobilise women to take part in mass

agitation. It is difficult to develop women leaders from the fishing community due to several factors: women do not have family support because of social taboos and patriarchal views prevailing in the community; women are too poor to engage in activities beyond their own livelihood efforts; most fisherwomen lack education and even basic literacy; and finally, there is a lack of interest in empowering these women among the local panchayats and government officials.



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According to the Norwegian Fishery Register, Fiskeremantallet, Norway, today has about 311 full-time and 61 registered part-time women fishers, and 8,777 full-time and 1,342 part-time men fishers – a heavy reduction in numbers compared to the 1970s and late 1980s. The reduction continued past 1989 with the cod moratorium and the introduction of the quota system in 1990 for coastal fishers north of 62 degrees latitude.

In 2013, according to a research report from Norwegian Institute of Food, Fisheries and Aquaculture Research (NOFIMA), there were 6,253 men and 3,604 women who constituted the workforce in the country's fish plants. Among these, 5,700 workers lived in Norway, 396 workers came from western EU-countries, 2,961 from eastern EU-countries and 800 from the rest of the world. Researchers also report that there are probably more men and foreign workers in 2020 compared to 2013. In this article, I will focus on the fishers and the plant workers in spite of the fact that today there are many fishery related jobs onshore in Norway.

In response to Yemaya's queries, I will talk about political participation, policies, legislative conditions and agreements relevant for Norway as a welfare state that have impacts on fisheries'



labour rights, ownership rights as well as participation in resource management.

Even though laws and policies at the national level can and do constitute an important and supportive framework in fisheries, what happens at the regional and national levels may be different, leading to different gender practices locally. This will be described through some examples. Thereafter, I will focus on certain organizational aspects, especially in relation to the labour union, the owners' associations as well as women's actions and voluntary associations. The latter may represent women's empowerment and agency. I conclude by summarising some aspects of women's situations applying a gender equality perspective.

The Norwegian fishing fleet is regulated by the Ship Safety Act and its onshore processing industry by the Working Environment Act. Norway also has legislation strengthening the position of human rights in Norwegian law (the Human Rights Act) that came into force in 1999. In 2007, Norway ratified the ILO Convention 188 on working conditions in fishery. Since 1994, Norway has signed the EEA agreement following the EU

standard. Thus, the Norwegian fisheries operate within the context of national and international acts and policies. Since late 1970, Norway has also had an Equality Act and, from 2018, an Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act with impacts on some of the sectors and policies. This does not mean that gender equality always exists. Norway has a long coast with many boats, vessels and fish plants. As a result, there are many actors and varied organizational patterns. Given such an industrial structure, the practices vary, sometimes with different results for women and men.

In addition to the acts and regulations mentioned, there is a quota system involving a closed and an open quota. Closed quotas were, in 1990, given free of charge to active fishers fishing north of 62 degrees latitude. Since 2004, a political decision was taken allowing closed group quotas to be bought and sold, leading to an enormous increase in the value of these quotas. The open group quotas are smaller in terms of tons compared to the closed group quotas, and are distributed to active fishers by the Directorate of Fisheries, but returned when a fisher quits fishing. Most of the women coastal fishers have a quota in the the open group. This also results in differences in income. In 2017, men fishers earned at the average NOK 881,000 (ca USD 83,000 USD) a year compared to women who earned NOK 510,000 (ca USD 48,000). The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act does not prevent gendered work and wages. Having a closed or an open quota seems to have larger effects than the Equality Act.

The hourly wages for women and men were equalised in the 1970s with employers following agreements between labour unions and employers' associations. Where piecework with different pay rates continued, wage differences also continued. As my research in the 1980s discovered, such differences were, among others, connected to men's stronger bargaining power. Today the gender difference is explained by the types of work and working conditions that women and men have. Many fish plants have more men with permanent contracts based on fixed wages compared to women with seasonal contracts.

Practices at fish plants, employed in periods of fishery crises, often weakened the regulations defined by legislation and formal agreements. One example from the 1980s and 1990s is the reduction in the number of days of notice given to workers before and after an employment break. Since it was linked to unemployment benefits, the reduction, which was triggered by the scarcity of fish, hit women harder than men since men were often called in for maintenance work.

Depending on the working conditions in fish factories, the type of work done – for example, filleting – and the number of years that the women have worked, they reported earlier chronic muscular ailments such as problems of the arm and shoulder. This often results in sick leave with sick payment from the factory (up to 14 days) and from the government (up to one year). Even though women and men have equal rights, women appear to be more vulnerable to such issues, especially when it comes to routine and monotonous work, for example continuous filleting.

Legally, foreign workers have the same rights as Norwegian workers. However, well-educated workers report that they earn more in the Norwegian fish processing industry than they would in an administrative job demanding a master's degree in their home countries. Just as there are variations in Norwegian workers contracts, there are also variations in the contracts of foreign workers. Some residents from abroad may have permanent contracts while others have seasonal contracts. As per the Working Environment Act, seasonal contracts offer fewer welfare rights than do permanent contracts, since the employers having responsibilities only as long as the contract lasts.

In spite of contractual employment, there are examples that foreign workers lack information about rules and regulations and their entitlements with respect to, for example, working and housing conditions and payment for overtime. Thus, their employment conditions may be insecure. Recently, there have been examples of Lithuanian workers – some of them well-educated – going to court to get



the same rights as Norwegian workers, and winning, at least at the district court level.

Since the 1980s, the Directorate of Fisheries has started recording the number of men and women in fishing, their age and place of residence. Statistics for boats and vessels as well as for quotas are also being recorded. Data with respect to gender may be difficult to find but can be requested for. For workers, Statistics Norway also has an employment register. However, their open municipal registers include many different industries and it is difficult for people without local knowledge to ascertain whether the workers are related to fishery or not. There is an absence of easily accessible quantitative data. All these examples illustrate that gender equality is still to be reached in fishing and fish work in Norway in spite of The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. Nationality also seems to play an important role and leads to differences among workers.

The workers' union in Norway has had active women as members. This is also the case with the seagoing owners' section of The Fishermen's Association. Women have participated at meetings and in committees where resource management is

discussed. In 2019, Fiskarlaget Nord, the provincial association for the northernmost fishers in The Fishermen's Association, for the first time, elected a woman as a board member. In this way, women in the fisher-related associations still represent a significant minority.

The last 10 – 15 years Norway has also given fishers younger than 30 years who fulfill some criteria given by the Directorate of Fishery, quotas in the closed group, called recruitment quotas. One of the local associations has earlier proposed to the regional board of The Fishermen's association, Fiskarlaget Nord, that women should have 50 per cent of the 10 – 15 of these quotas. The provincial association on the upper level, Fiskerlaget Nord, made a decision that supported women, but added a sentence that men should not be discriminated against. When the Directorate made the final decision, only men were favoured according to the criteria used. So far, only one woman out of more than 120 has received such a quota free of charge. While new political signals from the Norwegian Parliament are awaited, it seems no such quotas will be given free of charge in 2020.

Facing page: Jørgen Lindkvist, fisherman and his fishing craft 'Jan Egil', Norway. Photo Credit: Siri Gerrard.
Below: Skarsvåg Village, Finnmark, the northern-most province of Norway. Photo Credit: Rune Seppola.



The policies of the recruitment quotas are also in line with the politics in most official white papers. They seldom problematise the condition of women fishers. I have even heard male members of The Fishermen's Associations comment that women's interests are taken care of since women have access to the open group quotas. In this way, women in fishing remain, to use Simone de Beauvoir's term, the second sex.

One of the changes the Directorate of Fisheries has made is in relation to the regulation for pregnant women and mothers with children under three years of age. They can continue to be registered even though they are not active fishers in this period. This change is the result of advocacy by fishing couples and women fishers' actions. However, most women fishers in the open group have their own boats and thus expenses to pay loans and maintenance. There is no or little support for them. Nevertheless, these examples show that women can use their power in organizing and effecting change in the professional unions and associations.

Women in the coast have always worked to improve the social, cultural and material conditions of their villages through voluntary associations and actions. An example is Norges Fiskarkvinnelag (Norwegian Fisherwomen's Association), an association which does not exist any longer on the national level, but was originally connected to The Fishermen's Association. Another example is the Norwegian Women and Family Association in coastal areas, which works to improve the situation of women and families in Norway and in other countries. Some of the members of these associations as well as other women often from fishery districts, became important members of political parties and have provided support to a more women-friendly fishery politics.

In some villages, gender-mixed community associations (bygdslag) have replaced women's voluntary associations to work for the improvement of the village and seeking representation with the municipality. The members are inhabitants, residents from foreign countries as

well as out-migrants. Women are active both as regular members and office bearers. These associations have sometimes played an important role and led to women's empowerment, encouraging competence, better practices and courage among members.

The Norwegian examples show that women still represent a large minority among fishers and a smaller though still significant minority among workers. Even though women in recent years have served as board members in coastal fishing associations and even as ministers of fisheries, they still face many barriers in their efforts to change fishery politics in a more women-friendly direction.

Women have always been active in community work, in women's actions and associations, and now increasingly, also in community associations. The Fishermen's Associations have passed a few political demands supporting women, for example, to get recruitment quotas. While until now mostly men received these recruitment quotas, the Directorate of Fisheries have put in place special regulations for pregnant women and mothers with small children. Despite these small successes, official fishery policies as articulated in the government's white papers still pay little attention to women and gender. As a result, an imbalanced gender fishery structure persists. Although, fortunately, there are women and some men who refuse to give in and continue to fight, the road to gender equality in Norway's fisheries is still slippery and long.

Note: Great thanks to Edgar Henriksen who supplied me with the NOFIMA reports, Jahn Petter Johnsen who gave me information about foreign fishers and last, but not least, to the Yemaya editorial team which improved my English.

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Facing page: Skarsvåg Small boat fishing, Norway.
Photo credit: Siri Gerrard.



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Women in the fisheries sector are active members of the Self Employed Women's Association Union (SEWA-Union) in the state of Kerala

in southern India. Most of the women are involved in selling fish and in fish processing activities. In Kerala, such workers are considered to be allied workers. Their role in sustaining small-scale fishing, amidst the challenges posed by deep-sea and other corporate types of fishing, is well recognized by society. In the history of Kerala, the initial experiences of collectivization of the fisher community were through the formation of cooperatives; now fishers are also part of other political formations, including trade unions.

SEWA's involvement with fisher women in Kerala started in 2008 when it registered as a state level women's trade union in the informal sector. This registration followed the recognition of SEWA as a national trade union in India. SEWA organizes various sections of informal women workers, including domestic workers, fish workers, reed workers, tailors, home-based workers and other traditional workers.

In Kerala, women are active in the small-scale fisheries mainly in the districts of Trivandrum, Kollam and Kasergod. The changes in small scale fishing in the last two decades have changed the nature of engagement of women in the sector. Initially, women were involved in pre-harvest activities, such as making and mending fishing nets. They lost this role as machine-made nets came into

the sector in the mid-1970s. In the post-harvest activity, women collect fish from the landing centers and take it either to the market to sell or for drying fish. They do these activities as self-employed workers. In some places where fish landings are large, women also engage in wage labour, drying or sorting the fish at large centres. With mechanization of boats and increasing size of nets, fishery has got more centralized. This has altered women's access to fish. They have to travel longer distances to the landing centers, compete with male merchants and pay ready cash for the fish.

Most women find their vending space in state-run or privately-owned retail markets. Many are also engaged in door to door vending of fish. It was not an easy task to organize these women. Never in the mainstream of economic activity, and considering themselves dependent on their husbands, they were not ready to get organized. It took constant interactions in the markets and meetings in the villages to prepare them to organize on their own. In the beginning, the meetings ended in big clashes with interference from men in fish trade. This stopped only when women took on the leadership and marginalized those women who were unwilling to organize independent of their men folk.

Women in fish vending face numerous problems in Kerala. No infrastructure for preservation and

storage of fish at the landing centres or in fish markets have been provided. Such facilities would help women purchase in bulk and not force them to engage in distress sales. Facilities for resting at harbours are non-existent for women. This lack of basic sanitation facilities in marketplaces was one of the common issues that the union took up in many areas, and as a result of the struggle, in many markets, facilities have improved. Other issues include the male domination of market places in all the districts; unjust tax collecting systems; and the domination of male head load unions in the district of Trivandrum, which prevents women from handling their own fish stocks.

Tax collection is contracted to the highest bidder - often the main wholesale fish merchant - who then becomes the authority in the market. The bidder exercises his own right to collect any amount of tax. Inside the markets, the unionized head loaders determine the unloading rates which are exorbitant. SEWA has taken up this issue with the headload workers board at district and state levels, leading to some agreements being worked out on headload charges and market taxes. The women leaders are involved in all the discussions and negotiations related to their markets with the authorities. They have realized the strength of collective action.

SEWA Union has a trade committee for the fisheries sector where fifteen of the local leaders are members. This committee meets frequently to update and discuss issues pertaining to their own areas and markets. Over the years, this trade group has grown into a strong committee with independent leadership capabilities. Women are aware of the potentially adverse impact of the current development paradigm on the coast and the community. The trade committee organized against the Vizhinjam Industrial harbor after realizing the environmental consequences of a large port on fishing communities in the region. During the cyclone Ockhi and the devastating floods, many SEWA members lost their husbands and their means of livelihood. These experiences have helped the Union develop a strong understanding and position on environmental issues.

Data published by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) shows an increase in the number of women engaged in fisheries-related activities in recent years. Our own experience also reveals that many women who have crossed their child-rearing age are ready to work in the sector. Despite the large numbers of female workers in the sector, and also, despite the fact that SEWA is a recognized union of fisher women, it was hardly ever invited to the discussions between trade unions in the fisheries sector and the government. However, today, as a result of the persistent struggles of women fish workers, the union is invited by the government for all joint discussions. Through this process, SEWA is now involved in important discussions on the marine fisheries bill and other policy matters in Kerala.

Sustaining unity among women in the union is a continuous process. They have to face up to strong male presence in the markets. Women have no direct access to fish in the harbours and are cheated by the male merchants who control the fish auction. Most of them have huge debts contracted from building houses and from payments towards education, marriages and other responsibilities. Since the women are out on all the days except Sundays, they cannot play a role in local state-run fisheries organizations and cooperatives like the MatsyaFed Cooperative Society or the Kudumbasree Cooperative.

Workplace rights and the right to social security are emerging as important issues within the union. Discussions around the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) have created a certain level of understanding of women's key role in sustaining small scale fisheries among the membership. However, there is still a long way to go.



Pages 42 – 43:
Women removing the shell from mangrove mudshells
in Malaita, Solomon Islands. Photo credit: Wade Fairley.





TURNING POINTS

A Decade of Change for Women in Fisheries