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## **ADVANCING GENDER IN THE ENVIRONMENT: GENDER IN FISHERIES—A SEA OF OPPORTUNITIES**

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## INTRODUCTION

Sustainable fisheries are vital for achieving food security, alleviating poverty, and increasing economic growth around the world. In coastal countries, seafood accounts for up to 70% of protein intake and is an essential source of vitamins, fats, and minerals.<sup>1</sup> At the global level, more than 40 million people are employed as fishers, with an estimated 90% operating at the small-scale.<sup>2,3</sup> Wild-caught fisheries production reached 90.9 million tons in 2016, and approximately 30% of the world's marine fisheries are over-fished.<sup>4,5</sup> Understanding that the fisheries sector offers a vital pathway for development, numerous development agencies and partners, including USAID, work to promote sustainable wild-caught fisheries and conserve marine biodiversity around the world.

Women play a substantial role in the sector, making up nearly half of the overall fisheries sector workforce.<sup>6</sup> Present throughout the value chain, women are found in harvesting, processing, marketing, trading, and leadership roles. However, persistent gender inequalities prevent women from fully participating in economic opportunities and decision making, ultimately restricting the potential of the sector.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, a limited understanding of women's unique roles and contributions can result in a lack of recognition of their needs and interests in policies and programs, therefore affecting sustainable development outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

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- 1 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2016). *The State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016: Contributing to food security and nutrition for all*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5555e.pdf>
  - 2 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2018). *The State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016: Contributing to food security and nutrition for all*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/i9540en/I9540EN.pdf>
  - 3 The World Bank. (2013). *Fish to 2030: Prospects for Fisheries and Aquaculture*. At: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/458631468152376668/pdf/831770WP0P1I260ES003000Fish0to02030.pdf>
  - 4 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2016). *The State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016: Contributing to food security and nutrition for all*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5555e.pdf>
  - 5 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2018). *The State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016: Contributing to food security and nutrition for all*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/i9540en/I9540EN.pdf>
  - 6 The World Bank. (2012). *Hidden Harvest: The Global Contribution of Capture Fisheries*. At: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/515701468152718292/pdf/664690ESV0P1210120HiddenHarvest0web.pdf>
  - 7 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2014). *The State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2014: Opportunities and challenges*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3720e.pdf>
  - 8 Mangroves for the Future (MFF). (2016). *Gender Analysis Guide / Toolkit for Coastal Resource Dependent Communities*. At: <https://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/assets/Repository/Documents/Gender-Analysis-Toolkit-2018.pdf>

## WHY GENDER MATTERS IN FISHERIES

Across the wild-caught fisheries sector, there are three key issues that articulate the scale and potential influence of women in sustainable management as well as the gender-differentiated impacts they can experience:

- Fisheries management is strengthened by addressing gender issues;
- Fisheries are an important entry point and opportunity for women's economic and social empowerment; and
- Gender-based violence (GBV) is a specific concern in the fisheries sector.

## FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IS STRENGTHENED BY ADDRESSING GENDER ISSUES

A growing body of evidence suggests that addressing gender issues and integrating women's empowerment interventions into conservation result in improved governance and ecological results.<sup>9,10</sup> The effectiveness of programmatic approaches is improved when women's roles and perspectives in the sector are better understood. For example, engaging women as stewards for key fishery resources has improved the enforcement of regulations of nearshore ecosystems.<sup>11,12</sup> Additionally, increasing women's access to improved processing technologies has reduced product loss and increased product value, allowing fishing families to realize the same income while catching fewer fish.<sup>13,14</sup>

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9 Agarwal, B. (2009). "Gender and Forest Conservation: The Impact of Women's Participation in Community Forest Governance." *Ecological Academics*. Vol. 68. Issue 30. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46490461\\_Gender\\_and\\_Forest\\_Conversation\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Women%27s\\_Participation\\_in\\_Community\\_Forest\\_Governance](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46490461_Gender_and_Forest_Conversation_The_Impact_of_Women%27s_Participation_in_Community_Forest_Governance)

10 Leisher, C., et al. (2016). "Does the gender composition of forestry and fishery management groups affect resource governance and conservation outcomes? A systematic map." *Environmental Evidence*. Vol 5. Issue 6. At: <https://environmentalevidencejournal.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s13750-016-0057-8>

11 Clabots, B. (2013). "Gender Dimensions of Community-Based Management of Marine Protected Areas in Siquijor, Philippines." The University of Washington. At: [https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/23502/Clabots\\_washington\\_0250O\\_11904.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/23502/Clabots_washington_0250O_11904.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

12 Mangroves for the Future. (n.d.). "Sustainable use of mangrove resources to benefit poor women through a co-management pilot in the core zone of Xuan Thuy National Park, Vietnam." At: <https://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/grants/small-grant-facilities/vietnam/cycle-1-sgf-projects-vn/sgf-project-in-xuan-thuy-national-park/>

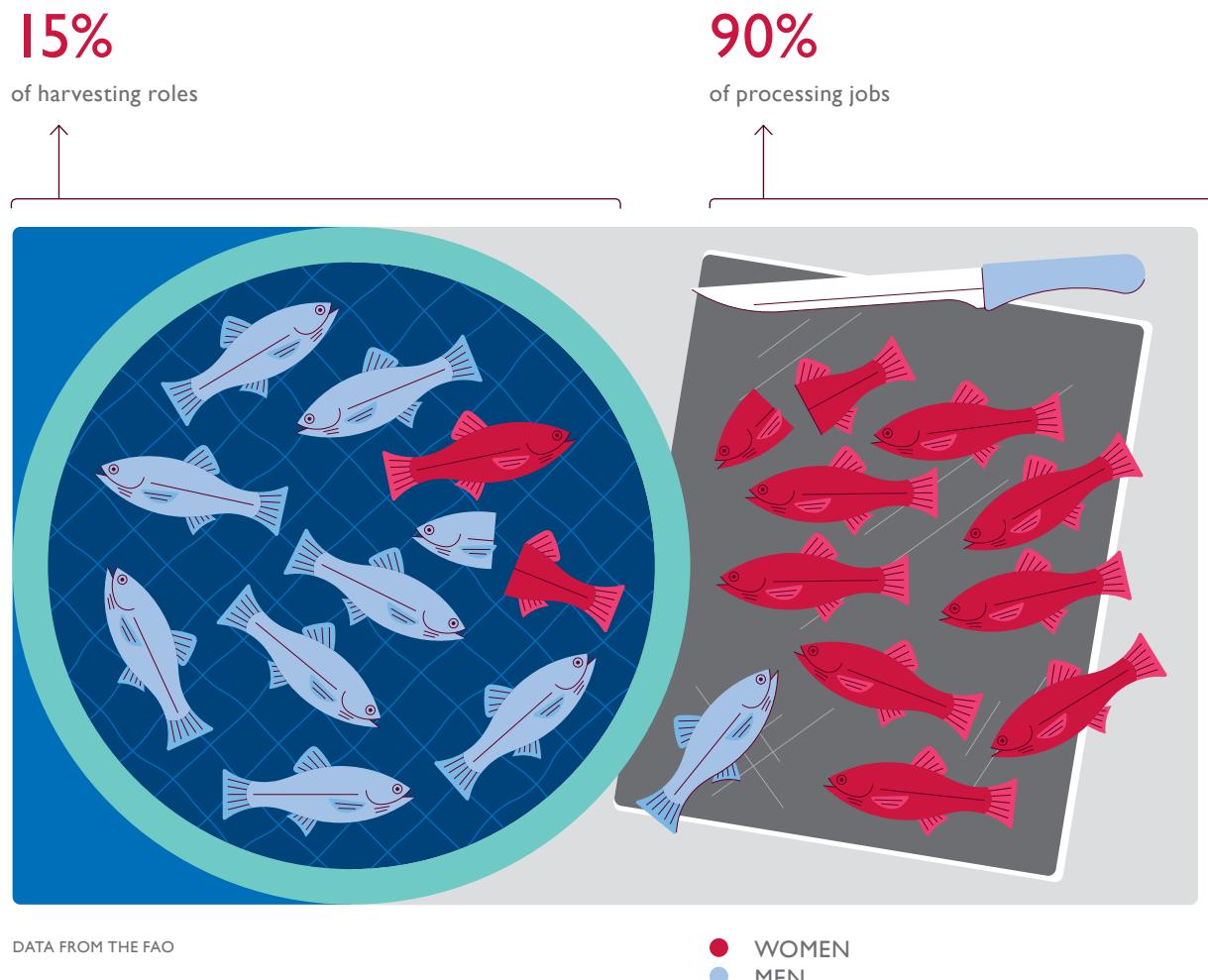
13 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (n.d.). "FTT-Thiaroye Ovens: Clearing the air for women fish processors in Cote d'Ivoire, and beyond." At: <http://www.fao.org/gender/insights/detail/en/c/458484/>

14 World Wildlife Fund (WWF). (2012). *Fisheries Management & Gender*. At: [https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/women\\_conservation\\_fisheries\\_2012.pdf](https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/women_conservation_fisheries_2012.pdf)

## FISHERIES ARE AN IMPORTANT ENTRY POINT AND OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Women are present in the wild-caught fisheries sector in a wide range of roles. The FAO estimates that women comprise 15% of the workforce involved in harvesting and fill 90% of the jobs in fish processing, which includes activities such as canning and gutting.<sup>15</sup> Since women represent a significant part of the fisheries workforce, the sector represents a high-impact opportunity for women's economic and social empowerment. Evidence shows that interventions to improve women's entrepreneurial and negotiating skills have strengthened women's livelihoods through increased income and agency, as well as better social and health outcomes.<sup>16,17,18</sup>

WOMEN HOLD



15 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2016). *The State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016: Contributing to food security and nutrition for all*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5555e.pdf>

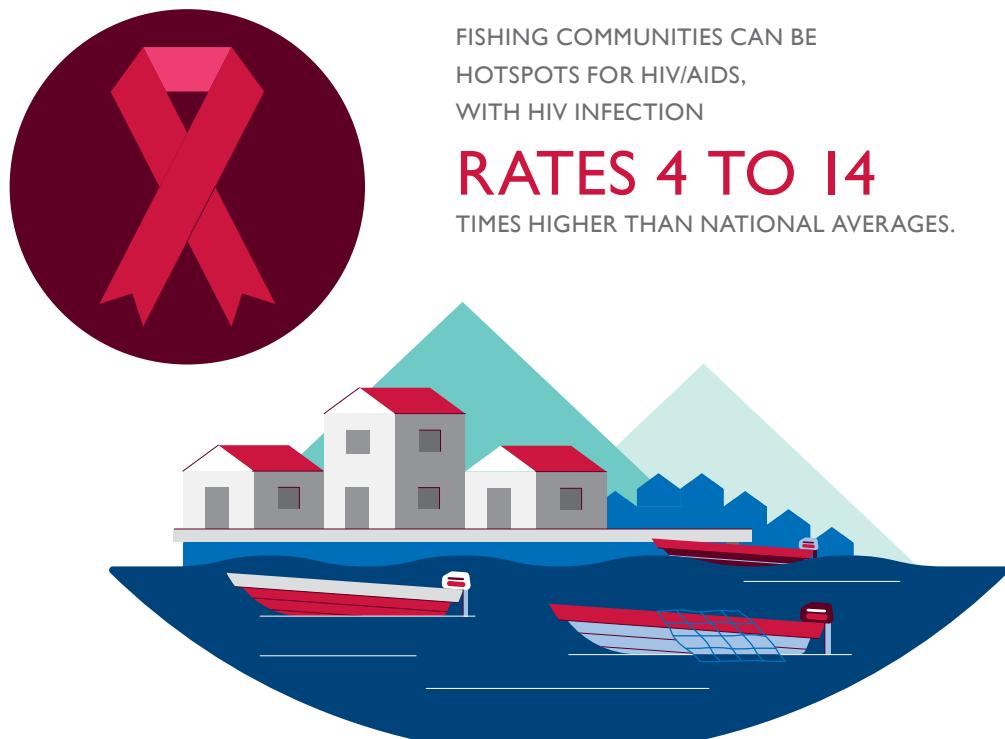
16 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (n.d.). "FTT-Thiaroye Ovens: Clearing the air for women fish processors in Cote d'Ivoire, and beyond." At: <http://www.fao.org/gender/insights/detail/en/c/458484/>

17 Matthews, Elizabeth, Jamie Bechtel, Easkey Britton, Karl Morrison & Caleb McClenen. (2012). A Gender Perspective on Securing Livelihoods and Nutrition in Fish-dependent Coastal Communities. Report to the Rockefeller Foundation from Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, NY. At: <http://anewcourse.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WCS-Gender-Fisheries-2012.pdf>

18 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2013). *Good practice policies to eliminate gender inequalities in fish value chains*. At: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/019/i3553e/i3553e.pdf>

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) IS A SPECIFIC CONCERN IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR

Though fisheries are an important entry point and opportunity towards advancing gender equality and increasing effective sustainable fisheries management, the sector is still challenged by pervasive inequalities, including GBV. Fisheries programming tends to not include considerations towards the elimination and prevention of GBV, constituting a lost opportunity and potential risk as programming can unintentionally exacerbate vulnerabilities. Worldwide, 35% of women have experienced some type of GBV in their lifetime.<sup>19</sup> In the fisheries sector, structural inequalities and harmful social norms put women and girls in vulnerable situations, where they may be affected by and exposed to violence and abuse. GBV negatively affects the long-term health, well-being, and productive capacity of survivors, creating consequences that extend beyond the survivor to her family and community.<sup>20</sup> Some fishing communities are also hotspots for HIV/AIDS, with HIV infection rates 4 to 14 times higher than national averages.<sup>21</sup>



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- <sup>19</sup> World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, South African Medical Research Council (2013). *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*, p.2. For individual country information, see *The World's Women 2015, Trends and Statistics, Chapter 6, Violence against Women*, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015 and UN Women *Global Database on Violence against Women*.
- <sup>20</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2018). *How can we protect men, women and children from gender-based violence?: Addressing GBV in the food security and agriculture sector*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/i7928en/I7928EN.pdf>
- <sup>21</sup> Matthews, Elizabeth, Jamie Bechtel, Easkey Britton, Karl Morrison & Caleb McClenen. (2012). *A Gender Perspective on Securing Livelihoods and Nutrition in Fish-dependent Coastal Communities*. Report to the Rockefeller Foundation from Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, NY. At: <http://anewcourse.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WCS-Gender-Fisheries-2012.pdf>

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This document is a collaboration between the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Global Programme on Governance and Rights, USAID's Office of Forestry and Biodiversity, and USAID's Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Bureau of Economic Growth, Education, and Environment. It aligns with key international frameworks, such as the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* and *Sustainable Development Goals 5 (Gender Equality)* and *14 (Life Below Water)*.<sup>22</sup> It also aligns with US Government priorities as well as policies from both USAID offices. Established as a Presidential Memorandum, the *Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative* (W-GDP) advances more prosperous and peaceful communities by empowering women to participate fully in civic and economic life.<sup>23</sup> It focuses on investing in gender equality and women's empowerment towards eradicating extreme poverty, building vibrant economies, and unlocking human potential on a transformative scale. Additionally, the US Government recently adopted the *Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act* (WEEE), which likewise calls for the promotion of women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, mandating gender analyses, gender indicators, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms towards implementation.<sup>24</sup> Across USAID, the Agency's *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy* defines gender equality and female empowerment as core development objectives, fundamental for the realization of human rights.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the Agency's *Biodiversity Policy* recognizes the importance of responding to the differentiated behaviors, roles, and responsibilities of women and men in efforts to conserve biodiversity for sustainable and resilient development.<sup>26</sup>

### ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITIES: INVESTING IN PROSPERITY AND PEACE BY EMPOWERING WOMEN

In 2019, the US President signed a Presidential National Security Memorandum launching *Women's Global Development and Prosperity* (W-GDP), a whole-of-government initiative of the US Government to promote women's economic empowerment globally as a *National Security Strategy* priority. W-GDP represents the joint efforts of ten agencies and departments, led by the White House, with the goal of economically empowering 50 million women by 2025. W-GDP builds on existing work and assists coordination in a growing portfolio of women's economic empowerment programming along three pillars:

1. Women prospering in the workforce through workforce development and vocational education;
2. Women succeeding as entrepreneurs by promoting women's access to capital, markets, assets, technical assistance, and networks; and
3. Women enabled in the economy by striving to remove legal, regulatory, and social barriers that constrain the full and free participation of women in economies.

You can read more about the W-GDP [here](#).

- 22 Other international commitments on gender equality include the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) with additional international frameworks on oceans include the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS).
- 23 White House. (2019). "Presidential Memorandum on Promoting Women's Global Development and Prosperity". At: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-memorandum-promoting-womens-global-development-prosperity/>
- 24 115th Congress of the United States of America. (2018). "Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act." At: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/3247/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22S3247%22%5D%7D&r=1&s=1>
- 25 United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2012). *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy*. At: [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy\\_0.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy_0.pdf)
- 26 United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2014). *Biodiversity Policy*. At: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USAID%20Biodiversity%20Policy%20-%20June%202015.pdf>

Though research papers, handbooks, and academia increasingly highlight the importance of women's empowerment opportunities in the sector, to-date, few focus the discussion on how women can also uniquely provide significant sustainable conservation contributions. Having reviewed a global sample of USAID and other international development fisheries projects—a number of which have made or found these connections—this guide therefore aims to not only uncover the roles women play in the sector but also how women can benefit from fisheries while contributing towards sustainable management. It also addresses how fisheries present challenges in mitigating and preventing GBV that is specific to the sector.

Designed for USAID and its network of partners working on gender issues, women's empowerment, biodiversity, food security, and fisheries in particular, this document summarizes research on the key issues, data, and linkages between gender and wild-caught fisheries. USAID staff and partners will find guidance support on how tools such as conducting a gender analysis, creating a gender action plan for fisheries programming, and developing results chains towards informing strategic interventions can address gender in fisheries. Featuring the latest case studies from USAID-supported projects, examples from across global fisheries programming and coastal management, recommendations, and resources, fisheries and gender practitioners from various other institutions can likewise use the guide as an overview on the ways that intentionally integrating gender into fishery management programs can result in more effective interventions and stronger sustainability outcomes.

## **ABOUT ADVANCING GENDER IN THE ENVIRONMENT (AGENT)**

This document is part of a series of knowledge products developed by [Advancing Gender in the Environment \(AGENT\)](#). AGENT is a ten-year program launched by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2014 and implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The purpose of the partnership is to increase the effectiveness of USAID's environment programming through robust gender integration and to improve gender equality and women's empowerment outcomes in a broad range of environmental sectors. AGENT envisions a world that approaches environmental work at all levels with gender-responsive policy and action. By recognizing women as agents of change and valuing the diverse knowledge, experiences, and capacities of women and men alike, AGENT drives transformation toward a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

## KEY DEFINITIONS

*Gender* is the economic, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. The social definitions of what it means to be male or female vary among cultures and change over time. Gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviors, values, and relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis ([USAID Gender Terminology](#)).

*Gender analysis* is a systematic approach, usually using social science methodologies, for examining problems, situations, projects, programs, and policies to identify the gender issues and impacts ([USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#)).

*Gender equality* concerns women and men, and it involves working with men and boys, women and girls to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles, and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, and in the community. Genuine equality means more than parity in numbers or laws on the books; it means expanding freedoms and improving overall quality of life so that equality is achieved without sacrificing gains for males or females ([USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#)).

*Gender equity* refers to the fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities (United Nations).

*Sex* is the classification of people as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex based on a combination of bodily characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones, internal reproductive organs and genitalia. Gender is the socially defined set of roles, rights, responsibilities, entitlements, and obligations of females and males in societies. The social definitions of what it means to be female or male vary among cultures and change over time ([USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#)).

*Female empowerment* is achieved when women and girls acquire the power to act freely, exercise their rights, and fulfill their potential as full and equal members of society. While empowerment often comes from within—and individuals empower themselves—cultures, societies, and institutions create conditions that facilitate or undermine the possibilities for empowerment ([USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#)). In order for women's empowerment outcomes to be achieved, several domains of empowerment must be addressed, including increased income, voice, and agency, among others.<sup>27</sup> Women's empowerment interventions should be coupled with male engagement strategies that sensitize men to better understand the benefits of gender equality in order to avoid unintended negative social consequences.<sup>28</sup>

*Gender integration* involves identifying and then addressing, gender inequalities during strategy and project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation ([USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#)).

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27 United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2012). *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy*. At: [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy\\_0.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy_0.pdf)

28 United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2015). *Working with Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women and Girls*. At: [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/Men\\_VAW\\_report\\_Feb2015\\_Final.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/Men_VAW_report_Feb2015_Final.pdf)



## WOMEN IN FISHERIES

Fishing is often associated with the men who typically harvest fish from vessels offshore. However, in practice, men's fishing activities are heavily supported by women who play essential roles in not only processing and sales but by also financially and logically supporting fishing expeditions. A closer look at the sector therefore reveals that women and men working in fisheries typically fill distinct, but complementary roles.<sup>29</sup> When women's roles are unrecognized, their contributions are undervalued and the impacts of potential fisheries management decisions on fishing families and communities cannot be adequately understood. Filling numerous roles within the sector, women are active in harvesting activities, industrial to small-scale processing and trade, and corporate and community leadership.

### ADDRESSING CHALLENGES:

#### LACK OF GENDER DATA ON WOMEN'S ROLES AND IMPACT IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR

Effectively and adequately accounting for women's roles in the fisheries sector is limited by a lack of broad-coverage gender data. Many studies highlight the lack of quantitative and qualitative gender data and information as a major barrier for gender equality in the sector. Understanding the whole sector—broadly defined—with a gender lens is a critical part of any robust strategy to strengthen fisheries management and achieve sustainability outcomes.

Collecting, analyzing, and using gender data to inform policies, projects, and interventions goes beyond collecting only sex-disaggregated participation data. It requires a full accounting of gender considerations and sex-disaggregated data through the sector, from direct fishery activities, to division of household labor and discriminatory laws. Without the full context of the range of stakeholders across the sector, fisheries management strategies can fall short of achieving their goals. For example, the true economic impact of fisheries activities cannot be fully understood if the roles women play in all parts of the sector are not counted.

For more information on data gathering methods, please review *Engendering Statistics for Fisheries and Aquaculture* by the Asian Fisheries Society [here](#), as well as USAID's ADS Chapter 205 [here](#).

<sup>29</sup> WorldFish Center. (2010). *Gender and Fisheries: Do Women support, complement or subsidize men's small-scale fishing activities?* Issues Brief 2108. At: <https://d3gxp3iknbs7bs.cloudfront.net/attachments/d345620e-a536-4f8f-b668-ec88dd0d3079.pdf>

## **WOMEN IN HARVESTING**

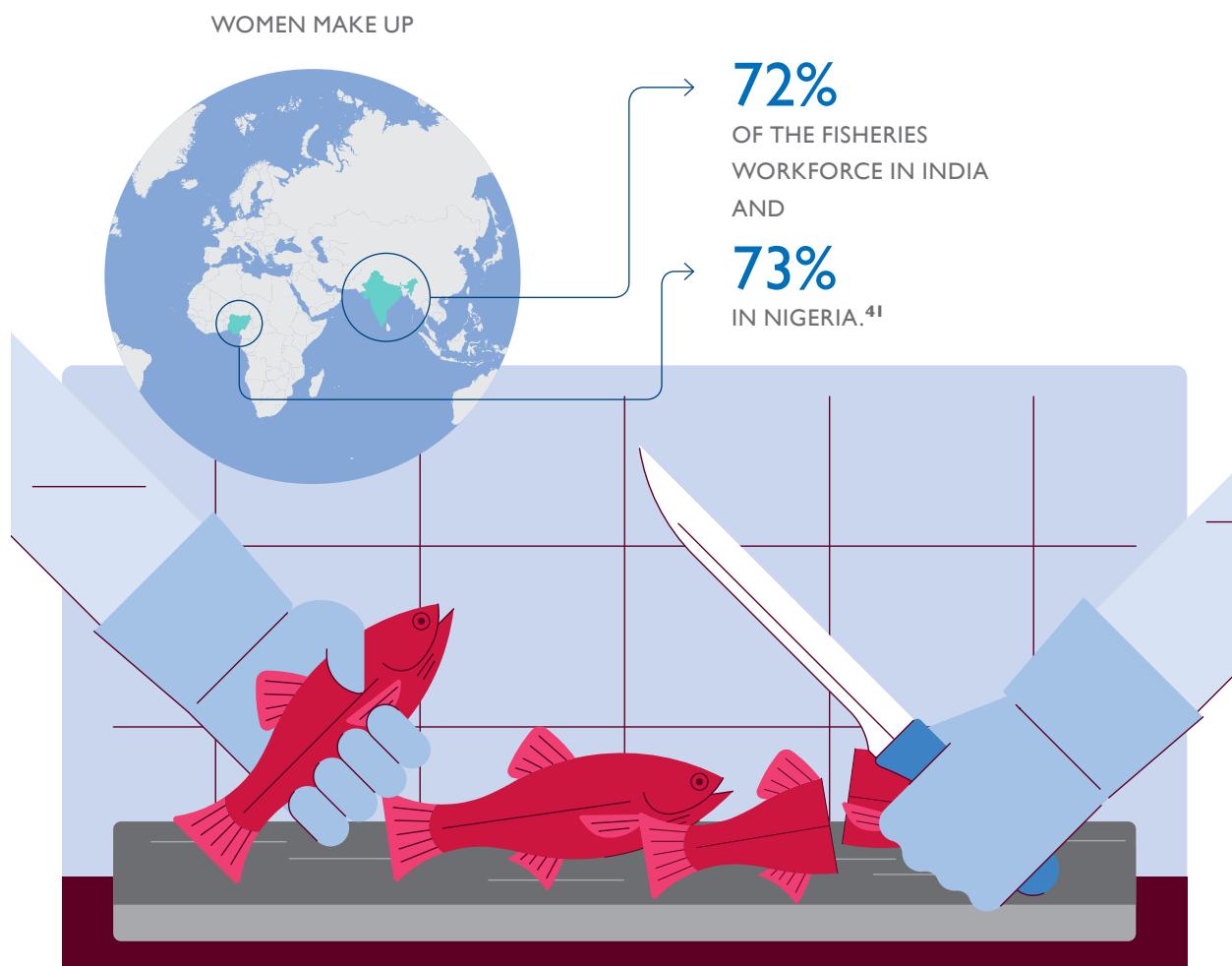
Harvesting is the process of catching or collecting fish, mollusks, crustaceans, and other species for consumption, trade, or sale. Women's and men's roles in harvesting activities are embedded in their social, cultural, and economic contexts. Traditionally, women are more involved in nearshore harvesting methods, such as collecting and gathering—activities known as “gleaning.”<sup>30,31</sup> Gleaning can be performed close to home and often requires low-cost equipment, enabling women to participate. At times, women's gleaning activities take place in nearshore ecosystems, such as mangroves, that are important habitats for the fin-fish caught by men. Women's harvesting and conservation activities can therefore affect the stock of fish available for men to catch. Evidence suggests that where women are effective stewards of mangrove resources, they assist in increasing the stock of fin-fish available for men to catch.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, efforts to conserve mangroves as part of fisheries management efforts can improve women's livelihoods.<sup>33</sup>

In some cultures, it is considered taboo for women to go out onto boats or to participate in fin-fish harvesting, resulting in men dominating these activities.<sup>34,35</sup> Though women are not as prevalent in the overall harvesting sector, they do support harvesting activities in many ways. In many parts of the world, women are responsible for boat maintenance and selling and mending fishing gear, such as nets.<sup>36,37</sup> In some examples, women finance men in purchasing or repairing their fishing gear in exchange for fish products to sell for profit.<sup>38</sup> In Koko, Nigeria, where most fishers are migrants, women earn additional income by providing lodging and meals for the transient fishers.<sup>39</sup>

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- 33 United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2015). *USAID Regional Program For The Management Of Aquatic Resources And Economic Alternatives*. At: [https://www.chemonics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/MAREA\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://www.chemonics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/MAREA_Final_Report.pdf)
- 34 Ogden, L.E. (2017). “Fisherwomen-The Uncounted Dimension in Fisheries Management: Shedding light on the invisible gender.” *Bioscience*. Vol. 27. Issue 2. At: <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/67/2/111/2931761>
- 35 Trottier, B. (1987). “Women in Aquaculture Production in West Africa.” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). At: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/s4863e/s4863e05.htm>
- 36 Lukanga, E. (October 2018). *Role of Women Fishworker Organizations towards Implementation and Monitoring of Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.
- 37 Sornkliang, J., et al. (October 2018). *Understanding Gender Dimensions in Small-Scale Fisheries of Kep Province, Cambodia*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.
- 38 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (1996). *Economic Role of Women in Fishing Communities: A Case Study of Koko, Nigeria*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-x0231e.pdf>
- 39 Ibid.

## WOMEN IN FISH PROCESSING AND TRADE

In the fisheries sector, processing is a series of mechanical or chemical operations such as drying, salting, smoking, freezing, cutting, or packing fisheries products in order to change, preserve, or trade them. Women make up the majority of the world's industrial- and small-scale processors, holding up to 90% of these jobs.<sup>40</sup> This makes many women's livelihoods directly reliant on a sustainable supply of quality fish. Depleted fisheries could downsize or close industrial processing plants, thereby negatively impacting women through lost wages and jobs. In small-scale fisheries, exhausted fisheries constitute the loss of entire livelihoods as women not only process goods, but also market and sell them.



40 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2016). *The State of World's Fisheries and Aquaculture 2016*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5555e.pdf>

41 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WorldFish Center. (2008). Small-scale capture fisheries: A global overview with emphasis on developing countries. At: [http://pubs.icla.org/resource\\_centre/Big\\_Numbers\\_Project\\_Preliminary\\_Report.pdf](http://pubs.icla.org/resource_centre/Big_Numbers_Project_Preliminary_Report.pdf)

## WOMEN IN INDUSTRIAL FISH PROCESSING

Women are an important part of the fish plant labor force. In industrial fish processing, women perform various tasks such as shucking scallops and shrimp, filleting and skinning fish, and packing and canning seafood products. Globally, commercial tuna canneries—one of the world’s most popular and commercially valuable fish—tend to mainly employ women for canning and other processing activities.<sup>42,43</sup> Similarly, women dominate positions in plants processing. In the South African fishing industry, women make up 62% of the workforce in fish processing plants and at least one third of this workforce is employed on a seasonal basis.<sup>44</sup>

Though women are an essential part of industrial fish processing, they have differentiated experiences and opportunities than men. For instance, gender stereotypes and norms can limit women’s opportunities to develop new skills and advance professionally, confining women to low-technology, short term, and lowest-paying jobs (e.g. weighing, grading, packing, and trimming), while men tend to hold secure, skilled, and higher paying jobs such as filleting, skinning, and deboning.<sup>45</sup> In many cases, as in Latin America, even if men and women receive equal payment for the same tasks, women rarely occupy higher-paid occupations.<sup>46</sup>

Women also face numerous risks and threats for their safety and job security. From Asia, to Africa, to Latin America, studies reveal that women employed in this part of the fisheries sector are subject to unsafe and exploitative labor conditions.<sup>47,48</sup> Workplace hazards include mechanical accidents, excessive noise levels, and exposure to chemicals and infections. For example, women involved in prawn and shrimp peeling spend long hours with their hands in ice water, without gloves or protection, which can lead to skin infections.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, with increased mechanization, those employed in the lowest paying, least skilled jobs are often the first to lose their positions in the fisheries sector.<sup>50</sup> For example, the introduction of a shrimp grader can reduce women’s labor input by 55%.<sup>51,52</sup> Sustainable fisheries are therefore not only critical for marine conservation, but to also protect and promote stable and dignified employment for women.

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- 42 The World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF). “Wild-caught Seafood: Tuna: Overview.” At: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/industries/tuna>
- 43 Demmke, P. (2006). *Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry*. At: [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.%20Tuna%20Industries%201\\_0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.%20Tuna%20Industries%201_0.pdf)
- 44 Jeebhay, M.F., Robins, T.G., & Lopata, A.L. (2002). *World at Work: Fish Processing Workers*. Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Vol. 61, Issue 5. At: <https://oem.bmj.com/content/61/5/471>
- 45 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2013). *Good practice policies to eliminate gender inequalities in fish value chains*. At: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/019/i3553e/i3553e.pdf>
- 46 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2016). *Promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment in fisheries and aquaculture*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6623e.pdf>
- 47 Human Rights Watch. (23 January 2018). “Hidden Chains: Rights Abuses and Forced Labor in Thailand’s Fishing Industry.” At: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/01/23/hidden-chains/rights-abuses-and-forced-labor-thailands-fishing-industry>
- 48 Jeebhay, M.F., Robins, T.G., & Lopata, A.L. (2002). “World at work: Fish processing workers.” *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. Vol. 61. Issue 5. At: <https://oem.bmj.com/content/61/5/471>
- 49 Noshirwani, M. (12 February 2019). “Re: Gender and Fisheries Paper.” Received by Maria Prebble. Email interview.
- 50 World Bank Group. (2009). *Gender in Fisheries and Aquaculture*. At: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENAGRILIVSOUBOOK/Resources/ModuleI3.pdf>
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## WOMEN IN SMALL-SCALE PROCESSING, ENTERPRISES, AND TRADE

Across small-scale fisheries, women harvest or buy fish goods from landing sites—and at times obtain fish from their fisher husbands—to process. At the small-scale level, women process fish by sun-drying, smoking, salting, and preserving fish, as well as shucking and preparing mollusks and invertebrates. In Ondo State, Nigeria, women represent 70% of the small-scale processing sector, responsible for activities such as gutting, splitting, and smoking fish.<sup>53</sup> In the Philippines, the majority of processing activities—such as filleting, salting, and drying—in the boneless siganid industry are undertaken by women.<sup>54</sup> However, it is important to note that men are increasingly present in processing roles in the supply chains of high-value products, such as tuna.

Once the catch has been processed, women also sell and market their value-added products at the small scale. Through such trade and enterprise, women control a multitude of supply chains for both home consumption and for the commercial sale of fish products. In addition to these enterprises, examples exist in which women subsidize men's fishing activities to enhance their contribution to household income and food.<sup>55,56</sup> In some situations, such as in Cape Coast, Ghana, and on Lake Victoria, Uganda, women are able to use their income from fish sales to invest in boats and gear to sell or rent to men for their harvesting activities.<sup>57,58,59</sup>

These areas of work are critical for development programming as small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are essential towards increasing prosperity and reducing poverty. The UN estimates that SMEs account for an average of 60-70% of total employment and 50% of gross domestic product (GDP). As such, SMEs are a key pathway towards achieving *Sustainable Development Goal 8* (Decent Work and Economic Growth).<sup>60</sup> In 2019, the *Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act (WEEE)* amended the 1961 *Foreign Assistance Act*—which focused on support for microenterprises—to include small and medium-sized enterprises as well. The WEEE Act also expands targeted assistance to include innovative credit scoring models, savings, financial technology, financial literacy, education, insurance, property rights, and other services to micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprise clients—particularly those owned, managed, or controlled by women.<sup>61</sup>

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53 F.O., Agbebi.. (October 2018). *Occupational Hazard Among Women Fish Smokers in Coastal Areas of Ondo State, Nigeria*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

54 Macachor, C., et al. (October 2018). *Gender Participation in the Food Safety Implementation of Boneless Siganids Technology*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

55 WorldFish Center. (2018). Gender and fisheries: Do women support, complement or subsidize men's small-scale fishing activities? Issues Brief 2108. At: <https://d3gxp3iknbs7bs.cloudfront.net/attachments/d345620e-a536-4f8f-b668-ec88dd0d3079.pdf>

56 Harper, S., Zeller, D., Hauzer, M., Pauly, D., & Sumalia, U. (2013). Women and fisheries: Contribution to food security and local economies. *Marine Policy*. Vol. 39. Pgs 56-63. At: <http://legacy.searroundus.s3.amazonaws.com/doc/Researcher+Publications/dpauly/PDF/2013/JournalArticles/Womeninfisheries.pdf>

57 Walker, Barbara Louise Endemaño. (2001). "Sisterhood and Seine-Nets: Engendering Development and Conservation in Ghana's Marine Fishery." *Professional Geographer* 53 (2): 160–77. At: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1111/0033-0124.00277?journalCode=rtpg20>

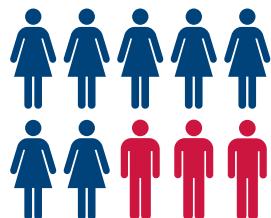
58 United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Ghana. (2016). *Sustainable fisheries management project (SFMP). Gender mainstreaming in fisheries management: a training manual*. At: [http://www.crc.uri.edu/download/GH2014\\_GEN003\\_SNV\\_FIN508.pdf](http://www.crc.uri.edu/download/GH2014_GEN003_SNV_FIN508.pdf)

59 Allison, Edward H. (2003). *Linking National Fisheries Policy to Livelihoods on the Shores of Lake Kyoga, Uganda*. LADDER Working Paper No. 9, Overseas Development Group, University of East Anglia, Norwich. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Edward\\_Allison/publication/237746808\\_Linkng\\_National\\_Fisheries\\_Policy\\_to\\_Livelihoods\\_on\\_the\\_Shores\\_of\\_Lake\\_Kyoga\\_Uganda/links/02e7e52b10bf467ded000000/Linkng-National-Fisheries-Policy-to-Livelihoods-on-the-Shores-of-Lake-Kyoga-Uganda.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Edward_Allison/publication/237746808_Linkng_National_Fisheries_Policy_to_Livelihoods_on_the_Shores_of_Lake_Kyoga_Uganda/links/02e7e52b10bf467ded000000/Linkng-National-Fisheries-Policy-to-Livelihoods-on-the-Shores-of-Lake-Kyoga-Uganda.pdf)

60 The United Nations. (n.d.). "Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day 27 June." At: <http://www.un.org/en/events/smallbusinessday/>

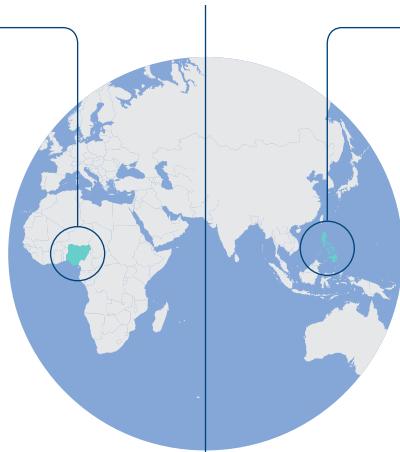
61 115th Congress of the United States of America. (2018). "Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act." At: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/3247/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22S3247%22%5D%7D&r=1&s=1>

OF A STUDY AREA  
IN COASTAL ONDO  
STATE, NIGERIA,  
WOMEN REPRESENT

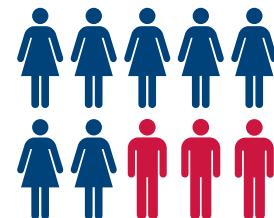


**70%**  
OF THE SMALL-SCALE PROCESSING  
SECTOR, AND THE MAJORITY ARE  
**MARRIED WITH A**  
**SECONDARY EDUCATION.**

DATA FROM THE GAF



IN THE PHILIPPINES,  
ABOUT



**70%**  
OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED  
IN THE BONELESS  
SIGANID INDUSTRY ARE  
WOMEN BETWEEN  
**35 AND 55**  
YEARS OLD.

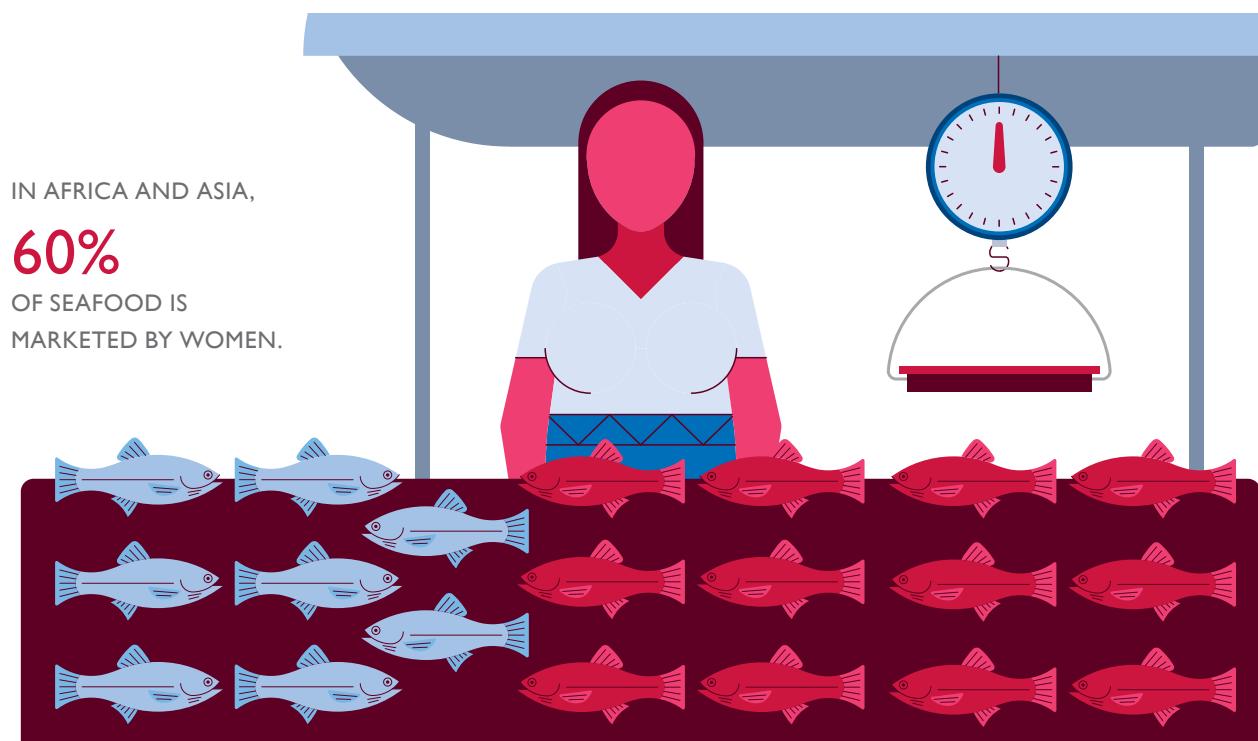
DATA FROM THE GAF

Throughout fisheries SMEs, there are numerous ways in which women and men have differentiated roles and experiences, including the types of products they sell, the business opportunities they have, and how limited access to capital and resources decrease the entrepreneurial potential of women due to social barriers. As women tend to dominate nearshore harvesting gleaning, the types of fish and products sold by women and men differ. For example, in the Solomon Islands women trade mollusks, crustaceans, and low-value fish while men sell larger reef fish.<sup>62</sup> Women's entrepreneurial involvement in the fishery sector is in small- to medium-scale enterprises, often because in many parts of the world, self-employment is the sole choice women have for their livelihoods.<sup>63</sup> In other cases, such as in Mexico, the women who own and manage small-scale businesses have often inherited them, and rely on a supportive family structure for their businesses to thrive.<sup>64</sup>

62 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2015). *A review of women's access to fish in small-scale fisheries*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4884e.pdf>

63 Fields, Gary S. (2014). *Self-Employment and Poverty in Developing Countries*. IZA World of Labor. At: <https://wol.iza.org/uploads/articles/60/pdfs/self-employment-and-poverty-in-developing-countries.pdf>

64 Pedroza-Gutierrez, C. (18 October 2018). *Managing Mercado Del Mar, A Case of Women's Leadership in the Fishing Industry*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.



DATA FROM THE FAO

Cultural factors often influence the control women have over their earned income and the extent to which this income is reinvested in their business or contributes to broader household expenses. As such, women's marketing and sale of fisheries products often occurs within micro and small-scale enterprises and the amount of money they can invest in equipment and assets necessary to scale up are limited.<sup>65</sup> For example, at one site in Kenya, men used their wives' earnings for personal expenditure, leaving the women little to reinvest in their fish processing businesses—until the introduction of a mobile money platform reduced the husbands' access to their wives' income.<sup>66</sup>

65 Westlund, L., Holvoet, K., & Kebe, M. (2008). Achieving poverty reduction through responsible fisheries: Lessons from West and Central Africa. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i0448e.pdf>

66 White, D. (2012). *The Social and Economic Impact of MPESA on the Lives of Women in the Fishing Industry on Lake Victoria*. SIT Digital Collections. At: [https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=2254&context=isp\\_collection](https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=2254&context=isp_collection)

The ability for women to achieve higher levels of success in this part of the sector is determined by a variety of factors, including discriminatory perceptions and access to resources, which is significantly influenced by fisheries management arrangements. For example, on the Surma River in Bangladesh, women's wages are only half of their male counterparts' despite playing the same roles in sun-drying processes.<sup>67</sup> In areas of Kenya, where matriarchal systems prevail, women have rights to a share of what their husbands catch as the men use boats and equipment their wives inherit through marriage customs.<sup>68</sup>

When women are limited in their ability to access resources, such as fish, finance, and technology, it can affect the scale, efficiency, and safety of their operations.<sup>69</sup> On Lake Victoria, women will sun-dry fish instead of smoking it—as men do—due to their lack of access to credit to afford fuel for smoking.<sup>70</sup> In some areas, occupational health hazards, such as the risk of parasitic infections, stings from fish spines, and ergonomic injuries result in significant income loss for women.<sup>71</sup>

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67 Marine, S., et. al. (2015). "Traditional methods of fish drying: an explorative study in Sylhet, Bangladesh." *International Journal of Fishery Science and Aquaculture*. Vol. 2. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272795828\\_Traditional\\_methods\\_of\\_fish\\_drying\\_An\\_explorative\\_study\\_in\\_Sylhet\\_Bangladesh](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272795828_Traditional_methods_of_fish_drying_An_explorative_study_in_Sylhet_Bangladesh)

68 Matthews, Elizabeth, Jamie Bechtel, Easkey Britton, Karl Morrison & Caleb McClenen. (2012). A Gender Perspective on Securing Livelihoods and Nutrition in Fish-dependent Coastal Communities. Report to the Rockefeller Foundation from Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, NY. At: <http://anewcourse.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WCS-Gender-Fisheries-2012.pdf>

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70 Ibid.

71 F.O., Agbebi. (October 2018). *Occupational Hazard Among Women Fish Smokers in Coastal Areas of Ondo State, Nigeria*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

## **WOMEN AS LEADERS IN FISHERIES**

Though women play numerous and varied roles throughout fisheries value chains, they tend to be absent in corporate, government, and community leadership. To-date, when fisheries programming includes women, they tend to be included only as beneficiaries. As women constitute half the sector, their skills and knowledge should also represent half the ideas and solutions. Though under-representation exists at all levels of the sector, women are increasingly creating their own associations and organizations to advocate for their rights and access to productive resources, showing that investment in women's leadership promotes their agency towards achieving a more prosperous and sustainable fisheries sector.

### **CORPORATE AND GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP**

Compared to their participation in the fisheries sector at-large, women are severely underrepresented across government and corporate leadership positions. A 2018 report found that women received only 20% of 820 speaking opportunities at 20 seafood-related conferences.<sup>72</sup> In 2018, the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Environment and Gender Information (EGI) research found that of the world's national fisheries ministries, only 9 of the top positions (15%) were held by women.<sup>73</sup> This is a lost opportunity as studies show that there is a strong correlation between more women in governance with ratifying environmental decisions, showing that women can be effective environmental stewards.<sup>74</sup>

The data is just as stark in the corporate world. A study conducted in 2018 of the top 67 seafood companies found that men hold 90% of all directorships. It also found that 54% of the sample group are run exclusively by men, without a single woman director or board member.<sup>75</sup> A 2016 analysis of 71 major seafood companies confirmed that women are rarely CEOs, revealing there was only one.<sup>76</sup> At the Thai Union Group, women comprise 18% of senior-level management positions and hold zero board positions.<sup>77</sup> As there is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that more gender balanced corporate leadership are not only more successful but make more sustainable decisions, this is also potentially a lost opportunity across companies.<sup>78,79</sup>

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72 Briceno-Lagos, N., & Monfort, M. C. (2018). Putting Gender Equality on the Seafood Industry's Agenda. Women in Seafood Industry (WSI). At: <https://wsi-asso.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WSI-Global-survey-2018-english-l.pdf>

73 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). (n.d.). "Environment and Gender Information Platform." At: <http://genderandenvironment.org/egi/>

74 Norgaard, K., & York, R. (2005). *Gender Equality and State Environmentalism*. At: <https://pages.uoregon.edu/norgaard/pdf/Gender-Equality-Norgaard-York-2005.pdf>

75 Briceno-Lagos, N., & Monfort, M. C. (2018). *Putting Gender Equality on the Seafood Industry's Agenda*. Women in Seafood Industry (WSI). At: <https://wsi-asso.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WSI-Global-survey-2018-english-l.pdf>

76 Undercurrent News. (2016). "100 seafood CEOs, still only one woman." December 1, 2016. At: <https://www.undercurrentnews.com/2016/12/01/100-seafood-ceos-still-only-one-woman/>

77 McBain, Darian. (October 2018). *The Gender Agenda*. Keynote address at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

78 Catalyst. (2011). *The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women's Representation on Boards*. At: [https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/The\\_Bottom\\_Line\\_Corporate\\_Performance\\_and\\_Womens\\_Representation\\_on\\_Boards.pdf](https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/The_Bottom_Line_Corporate_Performance_and_Womens_Representation_on_Boards.pdf)

79 McElhaney, K., & Mobasseri, S. (2012). Women Create A Sustainable Future. UC Berkeley Haas School of Business. At: [http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/groups/online\\_marketing/facultyCV/papers/Women\\_Create\\_Sustainable\\_Value\\_FINAL\\_10\\_2012](http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/groups/online_marketing/facultyCV/papers/Women_Create_Sustainable_Value_FINAL_10_2012)



Susi Pudjiastuti, the Indonesian Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, visits the USS New Orleans, part of the Boxer Amphibious Ready Group operating in the US 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet operations to support security and stability in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

PJF MILITARY COLLECTION | ALAMY

## AGENT OF CHANGE: MINISTER SUSI PUDJIASTUTI OF INDONESIA

Indonesia is the world's second-largest producer of seafood, an industry that employs twelve million people.<sup>80</sup> In 2014, Susi Pudjiastuti became the first woman minister of Indonesia's Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ministry. Minister Susi Pudjiastuti is committed to advancing the sovereignty, prosperity, and sustainability of the Indonesian marine and fisheries sectors by protecting Indonesia's economic and environmental interests by strengthening enforcement against billion-dollar pirate fishing operations and foreign fleets.<sup>81</sup> However, the ministry could improve the monitoring and tracking of existing fleets which aim to shift to legal, reported, and regulated fisheries.<sup>82</sup> Additionally, she instated a six-month moratorium on issuing new fishing licenses so that the Ministry can adequately monitor and track the operations of existing fleets.<sup>83</sup> In 2017, Minister Susi Pudjiastuti received the Peter Benchley Ocean Award, one of the world's most prestigious maritime awards, in the leadership category.<sup>84</sup>

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- 80 The Nature Conservancy (TNC). (n.d.). "Stories in Indonesia: Indonesia Fisheries." At: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/asia-pacific/indonesia/stories-in-indonesia/indonesia-fisheries/>
  - 81 Oxford Business Group. (n.d.). "Protecting and developing Indonesia's fisheries." At: <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/analysis/protecting-and-developing-indonesias-fisheries>
  - 82 Adyas, H. (26 February 2019). "Re: Minister Susi." Received by the authors. Email interview.
  - 83 Oxford Business Group. (n.d.). "Protecting and developing Indonesia's fisheries." At: <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/analysis/protecting-and-developing-indonesias-fisherie>
  - 84 The Jakarta Post. (11 May, 2017). "Minister Susi honored with Peter Benchley Ocean Award in Washington." At: <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2017/05/12/minister-susi-honored-with-peter-benchley-ocean-award-in-washington.html>

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Across community levels, women also face barriers when it comes to accessing leadership and decision-making roles. While there is an opportunity for women to be a part of these organizations, women are often underrepresented—both as members and as leaders—due to social norms and a lack of recognition of women’s roles in the industry. For example, in Cambodia’s Kep Province, women’s candidacy for elected leadership positions is not welcome, as patriarchal beliefs dictate that women are inferior to men for leading roles and in decision making.<sup>85</sup> In fishing communities in Malaita province, Solomon Islands, 72% of women interviewed for a study reported they were never involved in resource management decisions, even though inheritance of land and marine tenure operates through both patrilineal and matrilineal descent.<sup>86</sup>

However, unlike appointed high-level corporate and government positions, at the community level, women increasingly create spaces for themselves. As community fishing organizations are diverse and dynamic—varying in formality, membership, and goals—women fishers are increasingly founding their own organizations and associations to sustainably advocate for their rights, share knowledge with one another, and design savings and credit facilities. For example:

- In 2010, the *Women’s Network for the Defence of Fisherfolk Rights* was formed in Thailand to protect women’s rights to access, use, and management of natural resources.<sup>87</sup>
- The Pakistan FisherFolk Forum (PFFF)—a large network of 70,000 fishers working together to create a gender friendly and democratic environment that advocates for fishing rights, fish marketing, fish conservation, the rehabilitation of the Indus Delta, and community-based disaster risk management—has high participation rates of women (approximately 50%) because the Forum’s leadership recognizes the importance of women’s roles and livelihoods within the community and therefore designs activities available and beneficial to them.<sup>88</sup>
- Brazil’s *Articulação Nacional das Mulheres Pescadoras*, established in 2006, addresses worker and land rights.<sup>89</sup>

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85 Sornkliang, J., et al. (October 2018). *Understanding Gender Dimensions in Small-Scale Fisheries of Kep Province, Cambodia*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

86 Pacific Community. (2018). *Gender Analysis of the Fisheries Sector - Solomon Islands*. New Zealand Foreign Affairs and Trade Aid Program. At: [https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Reports/Anon\\_I8\\_Gender\\_analysis\\_in\\_fisheries\\_SI.html](https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Reports/Anon_I8_Gender_analysis_in_fisheries_SI.html)

87 Women in Fisheries. (2010). “Sumadra Report.” At: <https://wif.icsf.net/en/samudra/detail/EN/3481-Gender-Agenda.html>

88 Pakistan FisherFolk Forum. (2018). “Vision, Mission and Values.” At: <http://pff.org.pk/missionvision/>

89 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017). *Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development: A handbook*. Available at: [www.fao.org/3/a-i7419e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7419e.pdf)



## THE BENEFITS OF INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING: UNDERSTANDING LINKAGES BETWEEN GENDER EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

For fisheries to provide food security, livelihoods, and economic growth over the long-term, fish must be harvested sustainably. Sustainable harvests rely on effective management arrangements, which are most successful when negotiated, recognized, and enforced by an inclusive range of stakeholders.<sup>90</sup> In addition to improving ecological outcomes, engaging women in fisheries is a meaningful opportunity to reduce gender inequalities and support women's economic empowerment. Integrated programming can strengthen key conservation and gender outcomes when women are engaged as constituents and leaders for sustainable fisheries management; when women are empowered as effective stewards of fisheries and associated ecosystems; and when women are engaged to become drivers towards sustainable fisheries markets. Each of these keys areas of consideration demonstrate that women's engagement strengthens fisheries management and results in stronger gender outcomes.

### ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITIES: ADOPTING GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has developed *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries* towards increasing food security and accelerating poverty eradication. The *Voluntary Guidelines* are a key global framework for managing fisheries—and includes gender equity and equality as guiding principles—as all FAO Members and partners must implement it. The *Voluntary Guidelines* was the first international instrument to recognize the importance of women in the small-scale fisheries sector worldwide and to address the need for the full recognition of fisher women's rights. Chapter 3 of the *Voluntary Guidelines* cover principles regarding:

- Transparency;
- Accountability;
- Economic, social, and environmental sustainability;
- Holistic and integrated approaches;
- Social responsibility;
- Feasibility and social economic viability;
- Human rights and dignity;
- Respect of cultures;
- Non-discrimination;
- Gender equality and equity;
- Equity and equality;
- Consultation and participation; and
- The rule of law.

You can read the full *Voluntary Guidelines* [here](#).

<sup>90</sup> Gutierrez, N. L., R. Hilborn, & O. Defeo. (2011). "Leadership, social capital and incentives promote successful fisheries." *Nature*. 470:386-389. At: <https://www.nature.com/articles/nature09689>

## **WOMEN AS CONSTITUENTS AND LEADERS FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

Whether women depend on seafood for income or as their main protein source, fishery sector livelihoods are dependent on the available supply of fish. As such, women should be engaged in fisheries management as evidence reveals that conservation and sustainability efforts are more likely to be successful when women's priorities are considered and when women actively participate themselves.<sup>91,92</sup>

### **WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHENS FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

- **Fully understanding women's roles and perspectives in the sector can improve the design of program interventions. Ignoring women's unique roles and needs is a missed opportunity that can result in poor project outcomes.** In 2005, the fisheries administration of the Congo worked with a fishing community in the Makotipoko district to establish new measures to protect resources along the Congo River.<sup>93</sup> In developing these measures, the roles and impact of women's harvesting and processing activities were not analyzed, nor were women present in any of the community discussions. As a result, the fishing practices used by women were banned and the women received no information on the new and promoted practices. This led to detrimental conservation impacts for the fish and invertebrate resources that women predominantly harvest. In response to these failed measures, the community established a gender action plan (see [page 44](#)) that assessed all community members' fishing activities and gave women access to trainings on the new practices.
- **Evidence reveals that mixed-sex natural resource management groups are more effective than men-only groups in strengthening resource governance and conservation.**<sup>94</sup> The TRY Oyster Women's Association holds exclusive rights to cockle and oyster fisheries within a national park in the Gambia.<sup>95</sup> For more than ten years, the association has worked in partnership with the national government and local authorities—who were predominantly men—to successfully develop a co-management plan for the national park, which included establishing size limits for catch and enforcing an optimal harvesting season. As a result, there has been a restoration of oyster stocks as well as reforestation of local mangroves.<sup>96</sup>

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91 Agarwal, B. (2009). "Gender and Forest Conservation: The Impact of Women's Participation in Community Forest Governance." *Ecological Academics*. Vol. 68. Issue 30. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46490461\\_Gender\\_and\\_Forest\\_Conversation\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Women%27s\\_Participation\\_in\\_Community\\_Forest\\_Governance](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46490461_Gender_and_Forest_Conversation_The_Impact_of_Women%27s_Participation_in_Community_Forest_Governance)

92 Leisher, C., et al. (2016). "Does the gender composition of forestry and fishery management groups affect resource governance and conservation outcomes? A systematic map." *Environmental Evidence*. Vol 5. Issue 6. At: <https://environmentalevidencejournal.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s13750-016-0057-8>

93 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2007). *Gender Policies for Responsible Fisheries*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-a0990e.pdf>

94 Leisher, C., et. al. (2015). "Does the gender composition of forest and fishery management groups affect resource governance and conservation outcomes: a systematic map protocol." *Environmental Evidence*. Vol. 4. Issue 13. At: <https://environmentalevidencejournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13750-015-0039-2>

95 Equator Initiative. (2017). TRY Women's Oyster Association. United Nations Development Programme. At: [https://www.equatorinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/case\\_1370356657.pdf](https://www.equatorinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/case_1370356657.pdf)

96 Al-Azzawi, R. (2013). *Gender in Conservation*. World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF). At: [http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/gender\\_in\\_conservation\\_report\\_june\\_2014\\_final.pdf](http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/gender_in_conservation_report_june_2014_final.pdf)

## WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN FISHERIES STRENGTHENS GENDER OUTCOMES

- **Empowering women promotes sustainable fishing practices and strengthens livelihoods.** In the Galápagos Islands, Pescado Azul, a women's cooperative, was created by local women to improve their employment opportunities and to provide for local food security.<sup>97</sup> The cooperative connects women to new markets for sustainably sourced tuna by selling it to tourists—the Islands' main industry. Its business model is to add value to its tuna catch by selling smoked products, rather than increase the scale of tuna fishing activities. To smoke the tuna, cooperative members burn wood from a destructive and invasive species of tree, therefore protecting the unique biodiversity endemic to the Galápagos.
- **Advocacy opportunities can increase legal recognition of the roles women play in fisheries sectors.** In the Philippines, women fish workers have organized at the community level, successfully advocating for fisher women's rights to be included in the *Philippine Fisheries Code of Conduct* and the *Magna Carta for Women*.<sup>98</sup> National policies on gender in fisheries are important because they can serve as a framework to guide effective fisheries governance, or hold countries accountable for their commitments. At the corporate level, research by the World Economic Forum suggests that increasing women's representation in corporate leadership roles is shown to correlate with future increased hiring rates of women leaders.<sup>99</sup>

## WOMEN AS STEWARDS OF FISHERIES AND ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS

To achieve sustainability in fisheries, USAID recommends implementing an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management. This approach recognizes the importance of focusing on the ecosystems and broader socio-ecological systems that support fisheries, rather than a single target species.<sup>100</sup> Within this framework, women can serve as stewards for key fishery resources and related ecosystems through restoration efforts and direct management of the resources they harvest themselves.

## WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHENS FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

- **Understanding women's roles and engaging their support improves fisheries management and enforcement.** In the Solomon Islands, local women created a spatial-temporal marine closure for a shellfish species integral to food security and income generation.<sup>101</sup> A study found that women's interest in and respect for the spatial-temporal marine closure arose because they were directly involved in monitoring and enforcement activities that established transparency and trust in the initiative's positive results. Based on the perceived success of this effort, other communities in the region began establishing their own protected areas.

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97 Equator Initiative and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2012). *Pescado Azul Women's Association of Isabela, Ecuador*. At: [https://www.equatorinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/case\\_I348069674\\_EN.pdf](https://www.equatorinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/case_I348069674_EN.pdf)

98 Kumar, H., and Prekash, S. (2010). Gender Agenda. Report from the Women in Fisheries (WIF) Workshop. At: <https://wif.icsf.net/en/samudra/detail/EN/3481-Gender-Agenda.html>

99 Duke, S. (2 November 2017). "The key to closing the gender gap? Putting more women in charge." The World Economic Forum. At: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/11/women-leaders-key-to-workplace-equality/>

100 United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (n.d.). "Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management." At: [https://www.seafdec-oceanspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/USAID-Oceans\\_EAFM-Factsheet\\_March-2018.pdf](https://www.seafdec-oceanspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/USAID-Oceans_EAFM-Factsheet_March-2018.pdf)

101 Aswani, S. & Weiant, P. (2003). "Shellfish monitoring and women's participatory management in Roviana, Solomon Islands." *SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin*. At: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242551882\\_Shellfish\\_monitoring\\_and\\_women's\\_participatory\\_management\\_in\\_Roviana\\_Solomon\\_Islands](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242551882_Shellfish_monitoring_and_women's_participatory_management_in_Roviana_Solomon_Islands)

- **Women's participation improves conflict resolution in fisheries management through women's social networks, cooperation, and information-sharing.** In Cambodia, women in community fishing organizations advocated for more transparency in financial accounting and decision making. They also urged for improved conflict management mechanisms between the offenders and enforcers of illegal fishing practices.<sup>102,103</sup> Since transparency, conflict management, and communication drive improved community resource management, Cambodian organizations strengthened their governance approaches by including women.<sup>104</sup> In another example in coastal Somalia, women—particularly mothers—had a positive deterrence effect on illegal fishing by dissuading men in their family from participating in piracy.<sup>105</sup>
- **Women's engagement in mangrove restoration improves a range of fisheries habitats.** Throughout the tropics, mangroves are an essential habitat for a variety of fish species harvested by both women and men. In many areas, mangrove forests have been degraded and over-exploited for building materials, firewood, or construction of aquaculture ponds. Across Asia, IUCN and the United Nations Development Programme lead *Mangroves for the Future*, a restoration and sustainable development project with gender integration as a core strategy.<sup>106</sup> In northern Vietnam, *Mangroves for the Future* works with impoverished women fishers who depend on harvests of shells, mollusks, and crabs, which are often collected illegally within Xuan Thuy National Park.<sup>107</sup> Through trainings and awareness raising, these women have become actively involved in the management and monitoring of these resources. Although the women continue to gather these species, they now do so in a more sustainable manner.

## WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN FISHERIES STRENGTHENS GENDER OUTCOMES

- **Secure resource tenure is the foundation for sustainable resource management and can result in higher productivity and efficiency.**<sup>108,109</sup> In mangrove areas on the Pacific coast of Nicaragua, women of the El Rosario cooperative were struggling to support their livelihoods by harvesting black cockles, a species threatened by overexploitation and habitat destruction. Through its Central American Regional Program on Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives, USAID supported members of the El Rosario women's

102 Gatke, P. (2008). *Women's Participation in Community Fisheries Committees in Cambodia*. Roskilde University. At: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/12517102.pdf>

103 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2015). *A review of women's access to fish in small-scale fisheries*. At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4884e.pdf>

104 Ibid.

105 Lawellin, B. & Monahan, M. (2017). *Don't Marry a Pirate: Women's Group Deterrence of Pirate Action Groups in Somalia*. At: <https://usnwc.edu/Portals/0/News%20and%20Events/Women%20Peace%20and%20Security/2017%20WOMAN%20PEACE%20AND%20SECURITY.pdf>

106 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). (n.d.). "Mangroves for the Future." At: <https://www.iucn.org/regions/asia/our-work/regional-projects/mangroves-future-mff>

107 Mangroves for the Future. (n.d.). "Sustainable use of mangrove resources to benefit poor women through a co-management pilot in the core zone of Xuan Thuy National Park, Vietnam." At: <https://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/grants/small-grant-facilities/vietnam/cycle-1-sgf-projects-vn/sgf-project-in-xuan-thuy-national-park/>

108 Freudenberg, M., & Miller, D. (2010). *Tenure, Governance and Natural Resource Management: Contributions to USAID Development Objectives*. TetraTech for USAID's Property Rights and Artisanal Diamond Development Project. At: <https://www.land-links.org/issue-brief/tenure-governance-and-natural-resource-management/>

109 Sida. (2007). *Natural Resource Tenure*. At: [http://www.the-eis.com/data/literature/SIDA37805en\\_Natural\\_Resource\\_Tenure.\\_position\\_paper\\_web.pdf](http://www.the-eis.com/data/literature/SIDA37805en_Natural_Resource_Tenure._position_paper_web.pdf)

cooperative to advocate for exclusive rights to harvest mangrove cockles to the national environmental authority. El Rosario was granted a concession to harvest along three hectares of coastline for the next 20 years. After submitting a business plan to the Regional Center for the Promotion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, El Rosario received a grant to purchase canoes, nets, and other equipment. Additionally, the Program trained the cooperative to prepare and sell cockle appetizer cocktails, instead of raw cockles. Selling a higher value-added product resulted in significant increases in income: today, the selling price for a cocktail is 1,100% higher than for raw cockles.

#### SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION:

#### INTEGRATING GENDER IN MARINE AND COASTAL CONSERVATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Across Central America, USAID has intervened in ten areas of biological importance and improved marine and coastal conservation across more than 2.3 million hectares. Click [here](#) to learn more about how USAID worked to integrate gender throughout the USAID *Regional Program for the Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives*, including a recycling program for indigenous women, trainings for women to raise awareness on labor rights, as well as more information on the El Rosario case study.

*Intervention: Tenure rights | access to finance | women's cooperatives and associations*

- **Well-managed fisheries provide communities with livelihoods that are more secure.** Sustainable harvesting of fishery resources protects the natural capital women fishers rely on. With support from USAID's Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries (ECOFISH) Project, members of an all-women community organization volunteer as guards for a marine protected area that is popular with eco-tourists. Improved fisheries management can result in more opportunities for tourism, an industry where women make up a majority of the workforce.<sup>110</sup> Additionally, ECOFISH works to strengthen women's economic empowerment in the tourism industry through teaching women new skills to generate income from the influx of tourism.

#### SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION:

#### WOMEN AS PROTECTORS

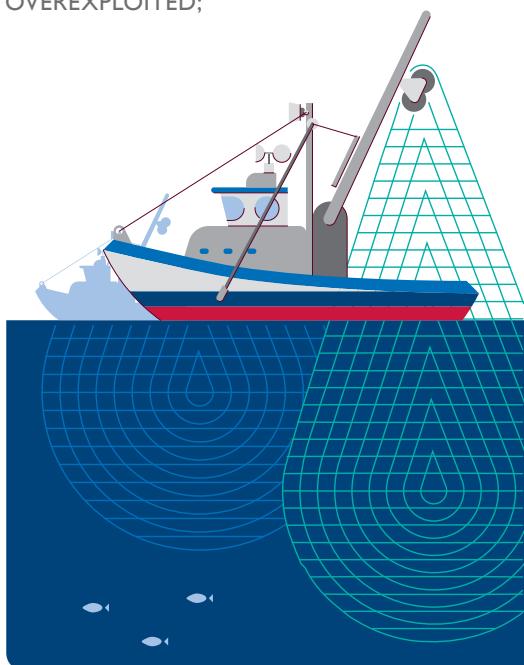
Beginning with the work USAID started under the Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest (FISH) project (2003-2010), and the completion of ECOFISH (2014), project communities in the Philippines have seen a 24% increase in the biomass of protected fish species and a 12% increase in community economic benefits. Click [here](#) to learn more about USAID's ECOFISH Project in the Philippines.

*Intervention: Women's cooperatives and associations | women's participation in leadership and decision making*

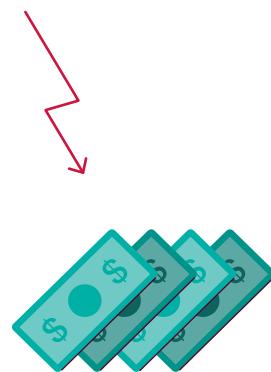
<sup>110</sup> United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (n.d.). "Gender and Tourism." At: <http://ethics.unwto.org/content/gender-and-tourism>

**30%**

OF FISHERIES ARE  
OVEREXPLOITED;



THIS UNSUSTAINABLE  
MANAGEMENT RESULTS  
IN MORE THAN



**US\$ 80  
BILLION**

OF FORGONE LOSSES  
ANNUALLY.

DATA FROM THE FAO AND THE WORLD BANK

## WOMEN AND MARKETS AS DRIVERS FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN FISHERIES

The FAO estimates that 30% of fisheries are overexploited; this unsustainable management results in more than US\$ 80 billion of forgone losses annually.<sup>111,112</sup> Meanwhile, 60% are fully exploited; therefore, economic growth in wild fisheries will come not from catching more fish, but from reducing post-harvest loss of fish and increasing product quality and value through improved processing techniques.<sup>113</sup> Women dominate these parts of the fisheries value chain, so their roles and perspectives will influence the underlying economics that drive either the sustainability or overexploitation of fishery resources.

### WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHENS FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

- Women can influence fishery value chains and create incentives for legal and sustainable harvesting practices through their purchasing and monitoring practices.**  
In the Philippines, a women's association of small-scale processors has shown that women entrepreneurs who purchase fish for market are aware of how inefficiency and unsustainability

<sup>111</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (n.d.). "Fisheries." At: <http://www.fao.org/fisheries/en/>

<sup>112</sup> The World Bank. (2017). *The Sunken Billions Revisited: Progress and Challenges in Global Marine Fisheries*. At: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/24056>

<sup>113</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (n.d.). "Fisheries." At: <http://www.fao.org/fisheries/en/>

upstream and downstream from their activities affects their own efficiency and profitability.<sup>114</sup> Over nearly three decades, the association has sustainably contributed to increased community employment and beneficial government expenditure in the area because of increased revenue from fishing permits and taxes. In another area of the Philippines, women working at landing and docking areas serve as informants of illegal fishing practices.<sup>115</sup>

- **Including women in fisheries monitoring and data collection efforts improves information and transparency for management decisions.** As women are often the first buyers of fish, they are uniquely positioned to improve data and information on catch documentation and traceability. In Bitung, Indonesia, USAID is seeking to pilot a financial technology solution towards women's economic empowerment alongside the documentation and traceability app currently in use by small-scale buyers and brokers. This activity operates on the assumption that increased access to financial tools will result in better fisheries data, improved livelihoods for women fisherfolk, and ultimately better fisheries management through economically empowered and engaged women in the fishing sector.

## WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN FISHERIES STRENGTHENS GENDER OUTCOMES

- **Access to market information and financial tools can improve profits and support for conservation.** In several projects around the world, increased access to technology, markets, and pricing information for women working in fisheries led to increases in fair market prices. For example, information and communications technology (ICT) can provide access to fish market and pricing information, which enables women to set competitive and profitable prices. On Lake Victoria, increased access to ICT better equipped women to negotiate prices, and within six months, the price of omema increased 20% in their village, benefitting both women and men.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, when women fish traders, processors, and transporters have increased access to ICT paired with training that improves the hygiene and quality of dried omema, they are able to reduce post-harvest losses by taking advantage of improved pricing systems and prices, reduction in marketing costs and transportation, and a better awareness of market trends that pay higher prices for better quality product.
- **When women organize to participate in fishery-related businesses, it can improve self esteem and confidence.**<sup>117</sup> In Barbados, interviews with women fishers participating in a processing association revealed the women's personal feelings about their livelihoods and functionality of the group. The women's most-common description for the association was "motivating" and many reported improved self confidence.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Gonzal, A., Pongthanapanich, T., & Bueno, P. (18 October 2018). *The Case of a 29-Year-Old Women's Association of Small-Scale Fish Farmers and Processors*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

<sup>115</sup> United States Agency for International Development (USAID). "Women Marine Guards Protect the Underwater 'Treasure'." At: [https://rmportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway/resources/projects/spotlight-on-mission-projects/ecofish-profile-story/women-marine-guards-protect-the-underwater-201ctreasure201d?set\\_language=en](https://rmportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway/resources/projects/spotlight-on-mission-projects/ecofish-profile-story/women-marine-guards-protect-the-underwater-201ctreasure201d?set_language=en)

<sup>116</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2013). *Good practice policies to eliminate gender inequalities in fish value chains*. At: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/019/i3553e/i3553e.pdf>

<sup>117</sup> Smith, G., & Shankar, A. (2015). *Empowered Entrepreneur Training Handbook*. Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves. At: <http://cleancookstoves.org/resources/342.html>

<sup>118</sup> Pena, M. & McConney, P. (18 October 2018). *How Has Organization Benefited Women in the Barbados Flyfishing Fishery? A look from Within*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

## ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITIES: EMPOWERING AND INVESTING IN WOMEN HAS A MULTIPLIER EFFECT

In addition to increasing the effectiveness of fisheries management, reductions in gender inequities also leads to broader socio-economic benefits. Data shows that advancing gender equality and women's empowerment has a multiplier effect across development sectors.<sup>119</sup> Studies suggest that men spend almost 70% of their income on personal needs while women invest as much as 90% back into households and communities.<sup>120</sup> For example, in Bangladeshi and South African fishing communities, increasing the share of assets controlled by women resulted in increased education for children in corresponding households.<sup>121</sup>

Unilever, a USAID partner and one of the world's biggest fish buyers, partnered with Acumen to develop a [toolkit](#) for entrepreneurs, impact investors, corporations, donors, and philanthropists to measure the impact of their investments on women and girls.

The FAO developed guidelines for microfinance specific to the fisheries sector, available [here](#).

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I19 United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). (n.d.). "Gender equality and the empowerment of women." At: <https://www.unido.org/our-focus/cross-cutting-services/gender-equality-and-empowerment-women>

I20 Matthews, Elizabeth, Jamie Bechtel, Easkey Britton, Karl Morrison & Caleb McClenen. (2012). A Gender Perspective on Securing Livelihoods and Nutrition in Fish-dependent Coastal Communities. Report to the Rockefeller Foundation from Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, NY. At: <http://anewcourse.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WCS-Gender-Fisheries-2012.pdf>

I21 Ibid.



## PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) IN FISHERIES

Gender-based violence (GBV) can take on many forms, such as the use or threat of physical, psychological, sexual, economic, legal, political, and social forms of control and abuse that can occur at any time throughout the course of someone's life. Limited opportunities for income diversification, decline of fish stocks, food insecurity, poverty, and migration for work are factors that increase the vulnerability of women, girls, and boys—as well as men—to violence and abuse.<sup>122,123</sup> The victims of GBV face physical harm, including rape, physical trauma such as fistula, increased exposure to HIV/AIDS, and death. Additionally, survivors can experience severe psychological and social impacts, such as mental trauma, depression, self-isolation from public life, and fear.<sup>124</sup> In sustainable fisheries programs in Pakistan, practitioners have found that when women and girls in coastal communities are victims of GBV, it can reduce their self-esteem, potentially affecting their ability to advocate for their needs or participate in activities.<sup>125</sup>

GBV also impacts the ability of survivors to achieve their full potential and contribute to the economy: studies in Tanzania show that women experiencing GBV in the form of intimate partner violence earned 29% less than those who did not, and this increased to 43% less when the violence was severe.<sup>126</sup> These impacts extend beyond the individual survivor, negatively affecting children, workplaces, communities, and national GDP.<sup>127,128</sup> In the fisheries sector, GBV persists due to social and structural inequalities that create vulnerable conditions, which include: a lack of access to fisheries resources; shifting social and power dynamics regarding fisheries roles; and increased risks of HIV/AIDS in fishing communities.

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- 122 Ratner, B., Asgard, B., & Allison, E. (2014). "Fishing for justice: Human rights, development and fisheries sector reform." *Global Environmental Change*. Vol. 27. (120-130). At: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959378014000101>
- 123 United States Agency for International Development (USAID) & PACT. (2015). *Fisheries Gender and Youth Analysis of Four Major Lakes in Malawi*. At: <https://cepa.rmportal.net/Library/biodiversity/Fisheries%20Gender%20and%20Youth%20Analysis%20of%20Four%20Major%20Lakes%20in%20Malawi.pdf>
- 124 WomanKind. (18 March, 2013). "Effects of Violence Against Women in Ghana." At: <https://www.womankind.org.uk/blog/detail/our-blog/2013/03/18/effects-of-violence-against-women-in-ghana>
- 125 Mangroves from the Future (MFF), et. al. (2018). *Regional Dialogue on Gender Dimension in Coastal and Fisheries Resource Management in South Asia and Southeast Asia*. Workshop Report. At: <https://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/assets/Repository/Documents/Regional-Gender-Dialogue-report.pdf>
- 126 Vyas, S. and Watts, C. (2009). "How does economic empowerment affect women's risk of intimate partner violence in low and middle income country settings? A systematic review of published evidence." *Journal of International Development*, 21(5), 577-602.
- 127 The World Bank, The Global Women's Institute of the George Washington University, and the Inter-American Development Bank. (2015). *Finance Against Women and Girls: Finance and Enterprise Development Brief*.
- 128 The World Bank. (2014). "Gender-Based Violence Prevention: Lessons from the World bank Impact Evaluations." *enGender Impact*. At: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/555731468149666405/pdf/878540BRIenGE0Box385206B00PUBLIC0.pdf>

## THE LACK OF ACCESS TO FISHERIES RESOURCES IS LINKED TO INCREASED GBV

Restricted or erratic access to fishery resources increases the vulnerability of women to GBV. For example, in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa, poor, unmarried, or widowed women fish processors and traders are sometimes coerced into sex in order to have access to and/or sell fish products when traveling to remote fishing camps.<sup>129</sup> Some studies have found that male fishers even prefer to sell fish to women with the hope of enticing sexual relationships, which is also sexual coercion.<sup>130</sup> In other cases, women in coastal fishing communities experience harassment by authorities patrolling areas, such as when securing boat licenses.<sup>131</sup> **GBV prevention training for fisheries ministries and relevant authorities—with particular focus on enforcement practices in remote and coastal areas—can help reduce the prevalence of exploitative GBV practices in fisheries.**<sup>132</sup>

## SHIFTING SOCIAL AND POWER DYNAMICS CAN INCREASE GBV IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR

GBV is also exacerbated by characteristics of the fishing sector that can reinforce toxic masculinity; these characteristics can include negative peer pressure associated with strong group identity and social isolation or marginalization, resulting from stark gendered divisions of labor and long periods away during fishing trips.<sup>133</sup> In some fisheries communities, working directly with fishermen to address harmful social norms around violence and harmful masculinity has been an effective strategy to prevent GBV. For example, an initiative in a coastal district of Vietnam works with fishermen to stop violence against their wives through the establishment of the Responsible Men Club. Through the Club, fishermen receive knowledge, skills, mentoring, and peer support which enables them to develop coping mechanisms regarding the isolating and stressful nature of fishing work as well as positive ideas about masculinity and their role in their communities.<sup>134</sup>

Importantly, microfinance projects that target women without understanding local gender dynamics can inadvertently increase GBV as increased resources to women does not mean they have the ability to exert control over them or make decisions. In fact, providing such resources to women can contribute to GBV by changing household and gender dynamics. International studies also show that women breadwinners are more at risk of intimate partner violence than where men are the

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129 Bene, C., & Merten, S. (2007). "Women and Fish-For-Sex: Transactional Sex, HIV/AIDS and Gender in African Fisheries. Elsevier. At: [http://pubs.iclar.net/resource\\_centre/WF\\_973.pdf](http://pubs.iclar.net/resource_centre/WF_973.pdf)

130 United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and PACT. (2015). *Fisheries Gender and Youth Analysis of Four Major Lakes in Malawi*. At: <https://cepa.rmportal.net/Library/biodiversity/Fisheries%20Gender%20and%20Youth%20Analysis%20of%20Four%20Major%20Lakes%20in%20Malawi.pdf>

131 Lentisco, A., & Ulric Lee, R. (2015). A Review of Women's Access to Fish in Small-Scale Fisheries. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). At: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4884e.pdf>

132 United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and PACT. (2015). *Fisheries Gender and Youth Analysis of Four Major Lakes in Malawi*. At: <https://cepa.rmportal.net/Library/biodiversity/Fisheries%20Gender%20and%20Youth%20Analysis%20of%20Four%20Major%20Lakes%20in%20Malawi.pdf>

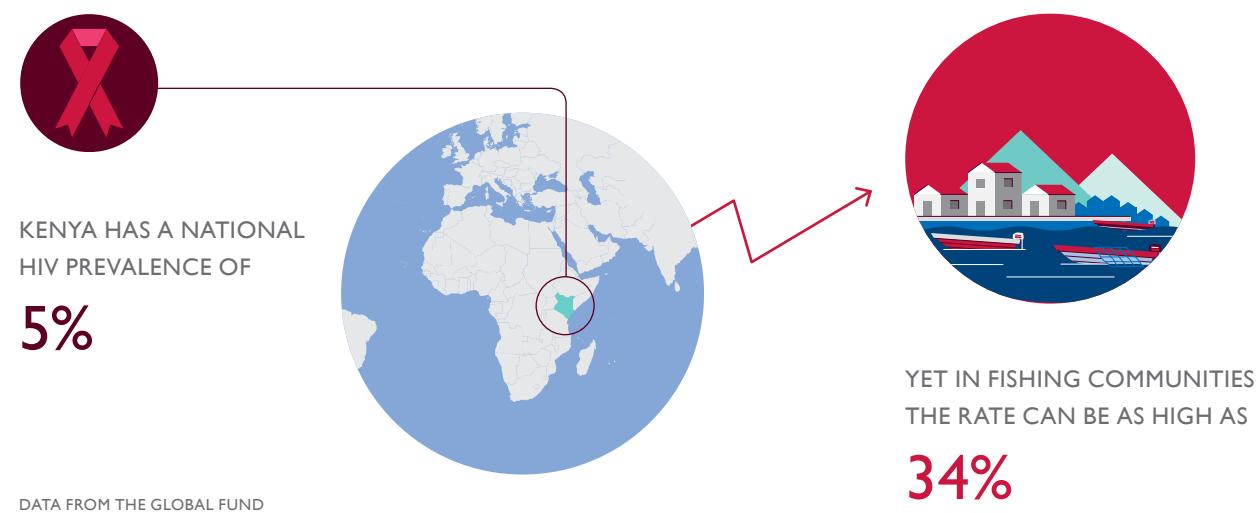
133 Pravalprukkul, P., & Resurreccion, B. (2018). *Gender in coastal and marine resource management: a literature review*. Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI). At: <https://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/assets/Repository/Documents/MFF-SEAFDEC-Gender-in-coastal-marine-resources-Literature-review.pdf>

134 Tu-Anh Hoang, Trang Thu Quach & Tam Thanh Tran. (2013). 'Because I am a man, I should be gentle to my wife and my children': positive masculinity to stop gender-based violence in a coastal district in Vietnam. *Gender & Development*. 21:1, 81-96. At: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13552074.2013.767511>

sole earners.<sup>135</sup> For instance, in Indonesia, conflict resulted in women increasingly adopting men's traditional roles in the fisheries sectors. After the war, male ex-combatants returned home and cited such changes as contributing to household tension.<sup>136</sup> **International resources point to the value of gender analyses to help identify and understand gender dynamics to help inform sensitized approaches that avoid unintended consequences.**<sup>137</sup> More information on gender analyses can be found on [page 42](#).

## FISHERY COMMUNITIES CAN BE HIV/AIDS HOTSPOTS

Globally, HIV rates in fishing communities are 4 to 14 times higher than national averages, making them HIV/AIDS hotspots.<sup>138</sup> For example, Kenya has a national HIV prevalence of 5%, yet the rate can be as high as 34% in fishing communities.<sup>139</sup> Fishermen may engage in risky sexual behavior during long fishing voyages, increasing the prevalence of HIV or other sexually transmitted infections. However, the rate of HIV/AIDS in fishing communities is often higher among women than men, in part due to women's diminished bargaining power, lack of income, food insecurity, and other considerations that can lead to risky practices such as 'sex-for-fish.'<sup>140</sup> In Zambia, a study found that women fish traders are likely to be at risk for substance abuse and mental health symptoms such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and HIV sexual risk behaviors, with the results suggesting a relationship between trauma and HIV sexual risk behaviors.<sup>141</sup>



- I35 Abramsky, T., et al. (2011). "What factors are associated with recent intimate partner violence? Findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence". *Biomed Central Public Health*, 11(109).
- I36 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2012). *Blame It on the War? The Gender Dimensions of Violence in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*. At: <http://www.idrtrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/IAWG-UNDP-Gender-Dimensions-of-Violence-in-DDR-Blame-it-on-the-war-2012.pdf>
- I37 The World Bank, The Global Women's Institute of the George Washington University, and the Inter-American Development Bank. (2015). *Finance Against Women and Girls: Finance and Enterprise Development Brief*.
- I38 Matthews, Elizabeth, Jamie Bechtel, Easkey Britton, Karl Morrison & Caleb McClenen. (2012). *A Gender Perspective on Securing Livelihoods and Nutrition in Fish-dependent Coastal Communities*. Report to the Rockefeller Foundation from Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, NY. At: <http://anewcourse.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WCS-Gender-Fisheries-2012.pdf>
- I39 The Global Fund. (n.d.). "Sex For Fish." At: <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/specials/2016-12-01-sex-for-fish/>
- I40 Matthews, Elizabeth, Jamie Bechtel, Easkey Britton, Karl Morrison & Caleb McClenen. (2012). *A Gender Perspective on Securing Livelihoods and Nutrition in Fish-dependent Coastal Communities*. Report to the Rockefeller Foundation from Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, NY. At: <http://anewcourse.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WCS-Gender-Fisheries-2012.pdf>
- I41 Michalopoulos, Lynn T. Murphy., et. al. (2016). "Life at the River is a Living Hell: a qualitative study of trauma, mental health, substance use and HIV risk behavior among female fish traders from the Kafue Flatlands in Zambia." *BMC Women's Health*. 17:15. At: <https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-017-0369-z>

## SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION: INFORMING GENDER STRATEGIES FOR FISHING COMMUNITIES IN MALAWI

The *Fisheries Integration of Society and Habitats (FISH) Project*, a partnership between the Government of Malawi and USAID, strives to promote the more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of Malawian fishery resources. In developing a national gender strategy for fisheries, USAID and partner organizations carried out a gender analysis in fishing communities around four major lakes. The study revealed that women are often enticed into 'sex-for-fish' to secure fish and access to resources. To reduce instances of 'sex-for-fish' and to mitigate the risk of HIV infections, the study recommends ensuring that both women and men have opportunities in village savings and loan associations, training in efficient processing techniques, and to increase HIV/AIDS counseling and propaganda campaigns. In 2015, FISH recommended that the *National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy* should recognize that women and men play different yet complementary roles in the fishery sector and called for HIV/AIDS and gender issues to be mainstreamed throughout the sector.<sup>142</sup> These changes were made to the National Policy in 2016.<sup>143</sup>

Read more about USAID's FISH program in Malawi [here](#).

Intervention: GBV sensitization | access to finance

Gender-related methodology: Gender analysis

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142 United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and PACT. (2015). *Fisheries Gender and Youth Analysis of Four Major Lakes in Malawi*. At: <https://cepa.rmportal.net/Library/biodiversity/Fisheries%20Gender%20and%20Youth%20Analysis%20of%20Four%20Major%20Lakes%20in%20Malawi.pdf>

143 Government of Malawi. (2016). *National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy*. At: <http://www.unpei.org/sites/default/files/dmdocuments/Government%20of%20Malawi%20National%20Fisheries%20and%20Aquaculture%20Policy-%202016.pdf>



## FINDING THE OPPORTUNITIES: CONDUCTING A GENDER ANALYSIS, CREATING A GENDER ACTION PLAN, AND DEVELOPING RESULTS CHAINS

Gender issues and dynamics impact all parts of the fisheries sector and need to be understood and addressed for successful programming. As women can be leaders and advocates for sustainable fisheries management; successful stewards of fisheries and associated ecosystems; and effective as market drivers for sustainability in fisheries, it is necessary for practitioners to understand how gender issues and socio-economic dynamics impact all parts of the fisheries sector. Successful programming must therefore utilize gender tools to mine as many productive and effective integrated results and impacts as possible. Analysis and planning tools such as conducting a gender analysis, creating a gender action plan, and developing results chains can help practitioners develop effective integrated programs that can help maximize gender equality outcomes and sustainable results. Importantly, they can also help avoid unintended outcomes.

When designing and implementing programs to strengthen sustainable fisheries management and gender equality, it is equally important to anticipate and monitor for unintended consequences. Conservation interventions that do not adequately account for women's resource use and needs can unintentionally exacerbate gender inequality. Similarly, interventions to support women's economic empowerment by expanding their fisheries-related business can drive overfishing if these efforts are not well considered and thoughtfully embedded in a broader fisheries management programs.

For example, in the Okavango Delta in northwestern Botswana, women basket fishers use their unique ecological knowledge of fish migration and flood variability to make informed decisions on where and when to harvest.<sup>144</sup> However, this ecological knowledge did not inform zoning and closed-season regulations. As a result, these policies, which intended to improve sustainable outcomes, were instead perpetuating gender disparities between women's and men's access to resources and asset accumulation—whereas including their unique knowledge could have done the reverse. More information about the importance of conducting a gender action plan can be viewed on [page 28](#) in the example from the Congo.

As gender-based violence is of particular concern in the fisheries sector, fisheries management approaches must also use gender data and information to first understand the prevalence of GBV to be able to respond to GBV concerns that exist or arise during project implementation. You can learn more about GBV in the fisheries sector by referring to [page 37](#).

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<sup>144</sup> Ngwenya, B., et al. (2012). A case for gender equity in governance of the Okavango Delta fisheries in Botswana. At: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1477-8947.2012.001450.x>

## GENDER ANALYSIS

Across international environmental programming, gender analyses are recognized as an essential part of rights-based and effective sustainable natural resource management. As the world's largest environmental fund, the Global Environment Facility updated its *Gender Policy* in 2017, producing a *Guidance to Advance Gender Equality* requiring gender analyses for all project proposals to ensure projects do more than recognize the vulnerability of women or pay lip service to the potential of women to enact change.<sup>145,146</sup> In accordance with the *Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act (WEEE)*, a gender analysis is mandatory for all USAID projects and is required at the strategy, project, and activity levels in order to design interventions using the most context-specific and relevant gender information as possible.<sup>147,148</sup>

### SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION: A TRAINING HANDBOOK FOR GENDER RESEARCH IN FISHERIES

The USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership and the Asian Fisheries Society developed a training guide that provides tools to build the capacity of practitioners, experts, and students working in fisheries and gender theory. Building on USAID's field work from around the world, this manual is reflective of the diverse experiences of women and men in the fisheries sector.

*The Gender Research in Fisheries and Aquaculture: A Training Handbook* includes the following sections:

- Theorizing gender in aquaculture and fisheries research;
- Using intersectionality in research on gender and fisheries; and
- Gender in rapid appraisal of fisheries management systems.

Gender-related methodology: Gender analysis; gender in rapid appraisal of fisheries management systems

### SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION: CONDUCTING A GENDER ANALYSIS FOR COASTAL RESOURCE DEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

The *Mangroves for the Future* initiative developed a guide on conducting a gender analysis in coastal resource dependent communities. The guide recognizes that a gender analysis considers women's life experiences, needs, issues, and priorities, and that these issues will vary for different groups of women, depending on age, ethnicity, disability, income levels, employment status, marital status, sexual orientation, and whether they have dependents. Therefore, different strategies may be necessary to achieve equitable outcomes for women and men, and for different groups of women. Additional guidance and information can be found in the Initiative's *Gender Analysis Guide*.

Gender-related methodology: Gender analysis

<sup>145</sup> The Global Environment Facility (The GEF). (2017). *Policy on Gender Equality*. At: <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/policy-gender-equality>

<sup>146</sup> The Global Environment Facility (The GEF). (2018). *Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects and Programs*. At: [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF\\_GenderGuidelines\\_June2018\\_r5.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF_GenderGuidelines_June2018_r5.pdf)

<sup>147</sup> United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2017). *ADS Chapter 205: Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle*. At: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf>

<sup>148</sup> 115th Congress of the United States of America. (2018). "Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act." At: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/3247/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22S3247%22%5D%7D&r=1&s=1>

## SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION: CONDUCTING A GENDER-RESPONSIVE VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Gender analyses of seafood value chains can identify actions to ensure economic autonomy for women and men by providing information on the differentiated positions of power and agency. In the Philippines, USAID supported a gender-responsive value chain analysis (GRVCA), focusing on fishing activities in the area of General Santos City, to understand women's unique roles and contributions in the sector. The guidelines for the GRVCA were developed following the six domains identified in *Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle*. The analysis identifies ways for strengthened involvement of women to promote sustainable fisheries management. For instance, findings show that women buyers are perceived to be shrewder than men when it comes to fish trading and includes the recommendation to identify, recruit, and train local gender champions to participate in program work on sustainable fisheries management and seafood traceability.

To learn more about USAID's GRVCA of the fisheries industry in the Philippines, click [here](#).

Gender-related methodology: Gender analysis

As a gender analysis helps policymakers and program and project designers in identifying and understanding women's and men's unique roles—together with their different experiences, capacities, needs, constraints, and priorities—it is a mandated requirement that serves as a vital component to sound fisheries programming. The dynamics uncovered by gender analyses are complex and highly context-specific, especially as levels of gender equality can vary greatly from region to region.

A gender analysis is a socio-economic analysis of available and/or gathered quantitative and qualitative information to identify, understand, and explain gaps between women and men and typically involves examining the differences in the status of women, men, boys, and girls, in relation to:

- The laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices that influence the context in which women and men act and make decisions;
- The social norms and beliefs about what are appropriate qualities, life goals, and aspirations for women and men;
- Gender roles, responsibilities, and time use;
- Access to and control over assets and resources; and
- Patterns of power and decision making that reveal the ability of women and men to decide, influence, and exercise control over their lives.

Importantly, gender analyses include conclusions and recommendations towards enabling development policies and programs to narrow gender gaps to improve the lives of women and girls.<sup>149</sup> In the context of fisheries management, it is critical for program and project designers the ways in which women are not only considered as beneficiaries of empowerment programming, but as agents of change that can grow in agency and prosperity while contributing to sustainable fisheries outcomes as effective environmental stewards. While there are different frameworks and approaches to conducting a gender analysis, USAID's guidance can be found in [\*ADS Chapter 205: Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle\*](#).

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

## GENDER ACTION PLANS

After conducting a gender analysis, findings are used to develop a gender action plan. This plan is a set of strategic interventions that address and reduce the obstacles, impacts, and risks identified in the gender analysis, as well as strengthen program design and implementation. These strategic interventions aim to meet gender equality objectives, are implemented through a set of activities, and are tracked by gender indicators, which should be embedded in program planning and contribute to overall program goals. The Global Environment Facility's *Gender Policy* requires gender action plans.<sup>150</sup> At IUCN, national environmental gender action plans note the importance of earmarking budgets towards implementation.<sup>151</sup>

### SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION: IMPROVING GHANA'S FISHERIES PROGRAMMING THROUGH GENDER ANALYSIS AND ACTION PLANNING

In coastal Ghana, women account for nearly half of the fisheries workforce and are engaged throughout the entire fisheries value chain.<sup>152</sup> As women invest in canoes, gear, finance fishing trips, and even disburse loans, their income contributes to the fisheries value chain. The goal of the USAID-supported *Sustainable Fisheries Management Project* is to rebuild marine fisheries stocks through responsible fishing practices, improved co-management, and strengthened information systems. A gender analysis, gender action plan, and needs assessment of the program identified specific gender objectives, including increasing women as entrepreneurs in improved fish processing, increasing women's involvement as co-managers of fisheries resources, and increasing their access to finance.

To access the SFMP's Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, please click [here](#).

*Intervention:* Access to finance | Women's participation in leadership and decision making

*Gender-related methodology:* Gender analysis | gender action plan

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<sup>152</sup> United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Ghana. (2015). Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) Gender Mainstreaming Strategy. At: [https://www.crc.uri.edu/download/GH2014\\_GEN002\\_SNV\\_FIN508.pdf](https://www.crc.uri.edu/download/GH2014_GEN002_SNV_FIN508.pdf)

## RESULTS CHAINS

Results chains are a type of logic model that displays the relationships between what a program intends to do and the changes or results the program hopes to accomplish to achieve its purpose. The process of developing a results chain helps program teams discuss goals, refine assumptions, and assess strategic approaches. Results chains are thus effective tools for visualizing cause-and-effect relationships that could otherwise remain invisible and they are useful for guiding program decisions about monitoring and adaptive management.

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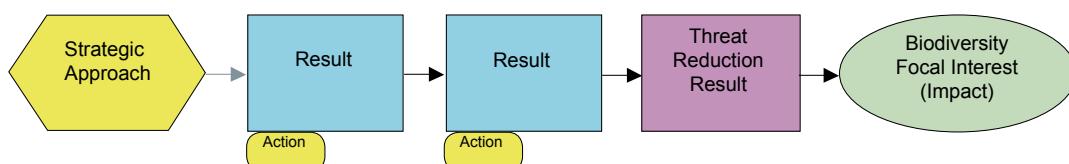
<sup>150</sup> The Global Environment Facility (The GEF). (2017). *Policy on Gender Equality*. At: <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/policy-gender-equality>

<sup>151</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). (2012). *The Art of Implementation: Gender Strategies Transforming National and Regional Climate Change Decision Making*. At: <http://genderandenvironment.org/resource/the-art-of-implementation-gender-strategies-transforming-national-and-regional-climate-change-decision-making/>

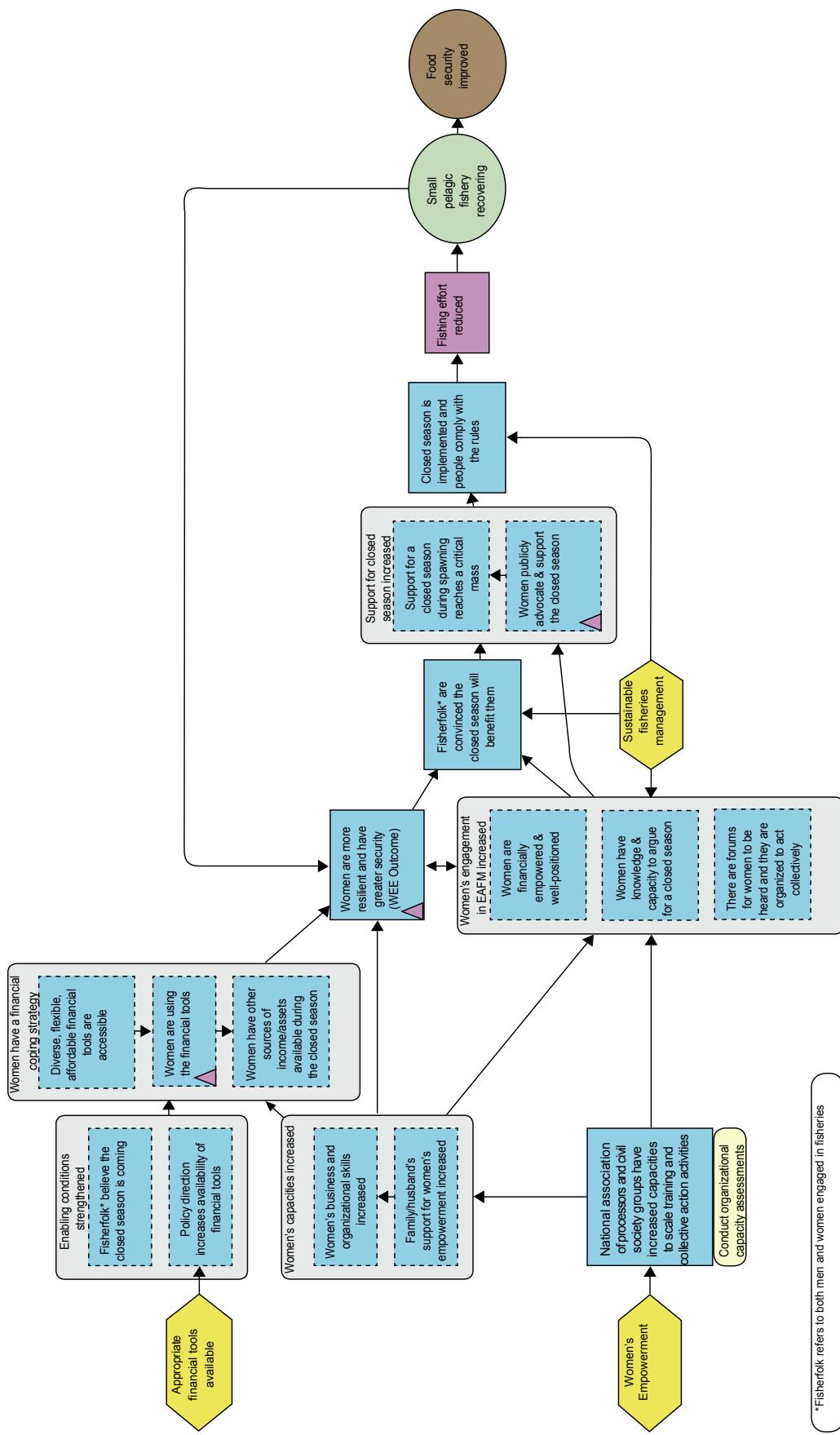
USAID's [ADS Chapter 201](#) requires the use of a logic model at the project level and recommends it at the activity level. Results chains are identified in the *ADS 201* as an appropriate logic model, and the Forestry and Biodiversity Office recommends using results chains to strengthen biodiversity programming. Results chains can also help strengthen gender strategies by clearly articulating the theory of change underpinning selected interventions and guiding efforts to learn during implementation.

The resource [Using Results Chains to Depict Theories of Change in USAID Biodiversity Programming](#) provides how-to guidance on developing results chains. An illustrative results chain is presented below, showing one way strategic approaches for women's empowerment, sustainable fisheries management, and improved access to finance might improve development outcomes.

- I. BIODIVERSITY FOCAL INTEREST (IMPACT) is the desired state of the biodiversity focal interest that a program seeks to achieve. In the illustrative example (Fig. 2), small pelagic fisheries are the biodiversity focal interest.
- II. HUMAN WELL-BEING FOCAL INTEREST (IMPACT) is the desired human well-being or development outcome that the program seeks to achieve. In the illustrative example, improved food security is the human well-being focal interest.
- III. THREAT REDUCTION RESULT(S) are the desired reduction in a specific threat that a program seeks to achieve. In the illustrative example, the program aims to reduce fishing effort.
- IV. RESULTS are the preliminary or interim results needed to achieve a threat reduction result and ultimately the biodiversity focal interest impact. In the illustrative example, desired results proposed include increasing women's capacities, increasing women's engagement in ecosystem approaches to fisheries management (EAFM), and increasing support for a "closed season," during which fishing is suspended.
- V. A STRATEGIC APPROACH is the set of actions with a common focus that work together to achieve a series of results in the chain. The three strategic approaches for this example include supporting women's empowerment, facilitating access to appropriate financial tools, and promoting sustainable fisheries management.
- VI. SELECTED ACTIONS are the specific interventions or sets of tasks undertaken in order to reach one or more results. An action must be linked to a result. In the illustrative example, "conduct organizational capacity assessments" is an action intended to support the associated results.



**Figure 1:** Basic components of a results chain | Source: Using Results Chains to Depict Theories of Change in USAID Biodiversity Programming



**Figure 2:** Illustrative results chain hypothesizing how strategic approaches for women's empowerment, sustainable fisheries management, and improved access to finance will catalyze results that improve priority development outcomes. This results chain depicts the theory of change that: IF women's capacities and enabling conditions are strengthened, THEN women will have a financial coping strategy; IF women's capacities are increased and they have a coping strategy, THEN women's economic empowerment will be increased; IF women's capacities and economic empowerment are increased, THEN women's engagement in sustainable fisheries management will be increased; IF women are more engaged in fisheries management, THEN there will be greater support for a closed season; and IF there is greater support for a closed season, THEN fishing effort will be reduced allowing small pelagic stocks to recover and increasing food security.



## STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS FOR ADDRESSING GENDER IN FISHERIES

When programming activities, there are many strategic interventions that can be implemented to address gender issues in fisheries and increase the effectiveness of programs towards achieving ecological sustainability, gender equality, and women's empowerment goals. This section provides examples of gender interventions commonly used as part of broader fisheries management programs. A summary table of interventions can be reviewed on [page 55](#).

### ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITIES: USING GLOBAL HANDBOOKS

To support implementation of its *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries*, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has published a complementary handbook, *Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development*. The handbook focuses on the specific responsibilities of States and all other stakeholders to implement policies and plans that help promote gender equality, while also supporting the sector's growth and sustainability. It is primarily intended for use by policy-makers and public institutions in their design and implementation of fisheries-related policies and programmes, and by fishing communities and their organizations.

The handbook is organized into three parts:

1. PART 1 briefly explains the concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming, followed by a description of women's work and roles in the small-scale fisheries sector.
2. PART 2 provides guidance related to the thematic areas of Part 2 of the SSF Guidelines: Responsible fisheries and sustainable development.
3. PART 3 provides guidance related to Part 3 of the SSF Guidelines: Ensuring an enabling environment and supporting implementation.

You can read the Handbook [here](#).

## STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S VOICES THROUGH ORGANIZATIONS IN FISHERIES

Women's organizations have the potential to benefit women in fisheries by enabling them to work collectively to promote access to resources, finance, technology, and equipment. Organizing can also amplify women's voices in advocating for sustainable fisheries management and improving working conditions. These types of associations are also often effective in improving women's business and negotiating skills and increasing their confidence.

For example, in Tunisia, women clam collectors earned very little due to their weak bargaining power within a larger system characterized by exploitative intermediaries who applied unfair transport and service fees.<sup>153</sup> FAO conducted a gender analysis and identified critical gender entry points, leading to a gender action plan. Several standalone gender activities were implemented, including the creation of an autonomous women's association to strengthen their bargaining power and advocate for their economic and political rights. The clam collectors mobilized to negotiate for better prices at the market and lower transport costs. The results were clear—women's incomes increased by 22%.

<sup>153</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017). *Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development: A handbook*. Available at: [www.fao.org/3/a-i7419e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7419e.pdf)

## SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION: SECURING WOMEN'S HARVESTING RIGHTS TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE GAMBIA

In the Gambia, the task of shellfish harvesting, processing, and selling traditionally falls on uneducated, rural, and/or refugee women.<sup>154</sup> Together, they formed a network to educate and equip one another with better knowledge of sustainable practices, as well as storage and marketing techniques. Working with the national government, and with USAID support, a co-management plan was established, granting the TRY Oyster Women's Association exclusive rights to harvesting areas—the first-ever African women's fisheries organization to secure such rights. As a result, women's incomes increased due to visibility in and expanded access to markets and increased negotiation and bargaining power in setting prices. In 2012, the TRY Oyster Women's Association received the Equator Prize, a honor given by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to recognize community-based efforts to reduce poverty through the sustainable use of biodiversity.

To read more about USAID and the TRY Oyster Women's Association, please click [here](#).

Intervention: Women's cooperatives and associations | tenure rights

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<sup>154</sup> Equator Initiative. (n.d.). "Try Oyster Women's Association." At: <https://www.equatorinitiative.org/2017/05/30/try-oyster-womens-association/>

## SUPPORTING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

Interventions to strengthen women's participation in leadership roles include tackling discrimination and other barriers that women face in these spaces. For example, in Cambodia, a government-supported project to develop a community fish refuge facilitated a revision to committee by-laws to improve women's participation.<sup>155</sup> The project also supported workshops and visits to demonstrate the value of women's leadership and sensitize men to respect and support women leaders. As a result, the percentage of women executive committee members doubled from 7% to 15% between 2013 and 2015.

At the corporate level, Cargill—a leader in the seafood industry and a USAID partner—joined the “Paradigm for Parity” Coalition, an organization committed to achieving gender parity across all levels of corporate leadership by 2030.<sup>156</sup> Measures to advance these efforts include naming more women to its executive team and launching a women's network.

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<sup>155</sup> Kim, M., et al. (October 2018). *Enhancing Women's Leadership to Influence the Productivity of Rice Field Fisheries Enhancement Project*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

<sup>156</sup> Cargill. (7 December, 2016). *Cargill Joins new ‘Paradigm for Parity’ Coalition*. At: [https://www.cargill.com/2016/cargill-joins-new-paradigm-for-parity<sup>SM</sup>-coalition](https://www.cargill.com/2016/cargill-joins-new-paradigm-for-parity-coalition)

## SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION: EMPOWERING INTERGENERATIONAL WOMEN CONSERVATION LEADERS

The *Coral Triangle Initiative for Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF)* is a multilateral partnership between the governments of Malaysia, Indonesia, the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, the Philippines, and Papua New Guinea, working to sustain the region's unique and diverse marine and coastal resources. USAID supports the CTI in applying cutting-edge science and innovative solutions to advance sustainable fisheries and marine protected area management. The CTI Women Leaders Forum (WLF) is a platform to build the capacity of women from the region to take leadership roles in sustaining the exceptional biodiversity and natural resources. In 2017, a training and mentorship program was added to the WLF to create a knowledge-sharing platform between senior women leaders and younger women with a goal of empowering a future generation of female conservation leaders.

Click [here](#) to learn more about how USAID supports the CTI-Women Leaders Forum.

*Intervention:* Women's participation in leadership and decision making

## STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S RESOURCE TENURE

Secure resource tenure can support women in managing fishery resources sustainably. USAID's *Marine Tenure and Small-Scale Fisheries: A Sourcebook on Good Practices and Emerging Themes* identifies key entry points for programming on marine tenure, such as developing coherent national policies and laws.<sup>157</sup> As an example of policy practice, Cambodia's *Strategic Planning Framework for Fisheries* sets a target for women "to be able to access all fisheries resources" as equally as men.<sup>158</sup> Additionally, strong community-based management organizations can strengthen women's resource tenure, such as how the TRY Oyster Association worked with the Gambian government to establish a co-management plan with exclusive harvesting rights.

<sup>157</sup> United States Agency for International Development (USAID). *Marine Tenure and Small-Scales Fisheries: A Sourcebook on Good Practices and Emerging Themes*. At: [https://land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/USAID\\_Marine\\_Tenure\\_Sourcebook\\_2017.pdf](https://land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/USAID_Marine_Tenure_Sourcebook_2017.pdf)

<sup>158</sup> Kingdom of Cambodia. (2010). *The Strategic Planning Framework for Fisheries*. At: [http://www.cdc-crdb.gov.kh/cdc/documents/Sector\\_Strategy/4\\_Fisheries/Fisheries\\_The\\_Strategic\\_Planning\\_Framework\\_2010\\_2019.pdf](http://www.cdc-crdb.gov.kh/cdc/documents/Sector_Strategy/4_Fisheries/Fisheries_The_Strategic_Planning_Framework_2010_2019.pdf)

## ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITIES: USING GLOBAL GUIDELINES ON TENURE

To achieve food security while contributing towards sustainable livelihoods, social stability, housing security, rural development, environmental protection, and sustainable social and economic development, the FAO has published *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security*. The *Voluntary Guidelines* provides a framework that States can use when developing their own strategies, policies, legislation, programs, and activities while informing civil society, private sector actors, and others to use as reference points on what constitutes internationally acceptable tenure practices.

In particular, the *Voluntary Guidelines* stress the need for:

- Equal tenure rights for women and men;
- Taking the differentiated obstacles women and girls face in relation to tenure and associated tenure rights;
- Participatory processes that include women and men from the outset of decision-making processes;
- Safeguards to protect women and other vulnerable people;
- Equitable access for women to customary tenure systems; and
- Guaranteeing equal access of women and men to land, fisheries, and forests in redistributive reforms.

You can read the *Voluntary Guidelines* [here](#).

## IMPROVING FINANCIAL TOOLS TO INCREASE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC WELL-BEING AND AGENCY

As women comprise a significant proportion of poor fishing households, specific financial tools to meet women's diverse and differentiated needs in the fisheries sector are necessary for a more sustainable value chain. However, these interventions need to be integrated into broader sustainable fisheries management strategies in order to account for and prevent risks of driving overfishing. In the Philippines, the FAO implemented a project in two provinces, targeting women fishers' economic needs, by establishing a revolving-fund scheme administered by two banks.<sup>159</sup> Women who received credit to support their fishery-related enterprises reported increased incomes, which they used to purchase household appliances, pay their children's school fees, and reinvest in their businesses. Their independent earnings contributed to increased self-confidence, control in family decisions, and access to community governance spaces. As women and their households become more financially secure, they can also potentially be more likely to participate in sustainable fisheries management strategies, such as seasonal closures and restoration activities.<sup>160</sup> In Sonora, Mexico, the Women of the Sea of Cortez is a local women's organization that received seed funding which they used to invest in buying juvenile black clams to repopulate depleted populations in local mangroves. As the women received seven hectares of mangroves as a ten-year concession, the women 'planted' 50,000 juvenile black clams, hired a specialist to teach them how to cultivate and increase the black clam population, and developed a management plan to sustainably harvest them for export. To date, the women have successfully increased the black clam population by 160%.<sup>161</sup>

<sup>159</sup> Tietze, U., & Villareal, L. (2003). *Microfinance in fisheries and aquaculture: Guidelines and case studies*. FAO Fisheries Technical Paper 440. At: <http://www.fao.org/tempref/docrep/fao/006/y5043e/y5043e00.pdf>

<sup>160</sup> Mohammad, E.Y. & Wahah, A. (2013). *Direct Economic Incentives for Sustainable Fisheries Management: The Case of Hilsa Conservation in Bangladesh*. International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). At: <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/16527IIED.pdf>

<sup>161</sup> Cota, Lucy. (26 February, 2019). Personal interview.

## PROMOTING PROCESSING TECHNIQUES TO ADD VALUE TO FISHERIES PRODUCTS AND IMPROVE HEALTH

Interventions to improve the efficiency of activities associated with fish products between the time the fish are harvested and the time the final product is delivered to the customer can result in economic, safety, and health benefits. In Lake Chad, women's groups were organized and trained on post-harvest processing technologies through a community technological platform, increasing income by 30-50% as a result.<sup>162</sup> In Côte d'Ivoire, a new oven system that doubles as a drier and storage unit reduces losses and delivers safer and better-quality fish with both higher rates of return and improved health outcomes for women.<sup>163</sup> Additionally, the European Union (EU) previously banned smoked fish imports from the Côte d'Ivoire, due to high polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) levels; with access to improved and safe processing technologies, smoked products are now able to meet the legal requirements for trade within the EU, which is valued at US\$ 1.7 million annually.<sup>164</sup>

### SUCCESS STORY: INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION THROUGH SOCIALLY APPROPRIATE STRATEGIES

In coastal Senegal, women play key roles in processing and trading, making them central to their fishing communities. With the support of the USAID *Collaborative Management for a Sustainable Fisheries Future* (COMFISH) project, women fish processors organized to develop a code of ethics to govern their trade and ensure that fish are processed in a hygienic and safe manner that complies with environmental regulations. However, due to high illiteracy, many women are unable to read and adopt the code. To make the code accessible, USAID project staff translated the code into song lyrics, dances, and stories—thereby enabling women to understand the code and memorize it through traditional forms of communication.

To learn more about USAID's gender work in the USAID/COMFISH project, please click [here](#).

*Intervention:* Communication activities

## IMPROVING WOMEN'S MARKETING AND SALES SKILLS

Interventions to improve women's livelihoods through the better marketing of fisheries products should be designed to address the barriers women face in entering markets and the tools and skills they need to be successful, while ensuring the vitality of fish stocks. In southern Thailand, the International Organization for Migration is supporting women from a disadvantaged and stateless ethnic group to make and sell *keropok ikan*, a local delicacy made from sardines.<sup>165</sup> The project assists women to focus on selling a higher quality product through targeted marketing tactics to increase wages. This approach increases sustainability and livelihoods alike as it prioritizes methods that aren't

<sup>162</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2013). *Good practice policies to eliminate gender inequalities in fish value chains*. At: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/019/i3553e/i3553e.pdf>

<sup>163</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (n.d.). "FTT-Thiaroye Ovens: Clearing the air for women fish processors in Côte d'Ivoire, and beyond." At: <http://www.fao.org/gender/insights/detail/en/c/458484/>

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> United Nations Migration Agency (IOM). (2018). "How Fish Snacks are Empowering Women in Thailand's South. Medium. At: <https://medium.com/@UNmigration/how-fish-snacks-are-empowering-women-in-thailands-south-2e722ea0500d>

solely focused on increasing the volume of sales. Several women are trained to oversee marketing and sales, which included setting up shops at food fairs and markets where the delicacy is known to be popular among Malay Muslims. This marketing approach results in earnings nearly 1,200% greater than the average Thai daily income.

Additionally, interventions targeting access to information and communications technologies (ICT) can benefit women in fisheries as radios, mobile phones, and television provide access to fish price information, as well as information on banking services or new fishing technologies. In Mumbai, India, small-scale women fishers benefitted from the trial of a new mobile marketing app that connected them directly to buyers through an online-retail format.<sup>166</sup> When women are able to access markets and sell their products quickly, it can result in lower losses of their catch.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Meher, S., et al. (October 2018) *Can Small Scale Fisher Women Take to Online Retail? Evidence from a Social Experiment with Mumbai Fisher Women*. Presentation at the 7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF7) in Bangkok, Thailand.

<sup>167</sup> Bahadur KC, K. et al. (2016). “Strategies to Reduce Food Loss in the Global South.” *Sustainability*.



## TABLE OF GENDER INTERVENTIONS

Gender interventions are often designed within a vacuum, meaning that while they are well-intended, they may not succeed due to implementation challenges on the ground. Additionally, interventions designed to strengthen women's economic empowerment could unintentionally drive unsustainable fishing projects. Therefore, these interventions should be designed considering both women's economic and sustainable outcomes. The table below describes promising interventions, identifies potential challenges to address during implementation, highlights examples of successful impact, and provides resources to aid in design and implementation.

INTERVENTION	DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR	EXAMPLE SUCCESS STORIES	AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND TOOLS
Create and support women's cooperatives and associations	Provide trainings on entrepreneurial skill development and sustainable fisheries management to cooperative members	Lack of collective organization power for women  Lack of entrepreneurial, financial, or market skills	In the Gambia, the TRY Oyster Women's Association was able to increase women's incomes due to visibility in and expanded access to markets, taking advantage of changes in the market-price of oysters, which increased by 50%. From selling a higher value-added product, the women received a greater income from harvesting fewer oysters. Additionally, the cooperative extended the closed season for harvesting—as a result, oyster size increased.	<a href="#">TRY Oyster Women's Association: The Gambia (UNDP)</a>  <a href="#">Cooperatives: Empowering Women Farmers, Improving Food Security (FAO)</a>
	Provide marketing support to women's cooperatives (i.e. branding and promotional tools, certifications, etc.)	Limited access to financial institutions and marketplaces		
	Link women's cooperatives to local financial institutions to improve access to credit			

INTERVENTION	DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR	EXAMPLE SUCCESS STORIES	AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND TOOLS
<p>Expand women's access to finance and financial services</p>	<p>Design, develop, and monitor financial services that meet women's diverse and differentiated needs, such as microcredit schemes, mobile finance, and savings mechanisms</p> <p>Conduct financial literacy workshops for women</p> <p>Recruit and connect financial institutions to fisheries</p>	<p>Restrictions on women to open a bank account</p> <p>Lack of financial literacy</p> <p>Women's access may be in name only, as decision-making authority around the funds rests with male relatives</p>	<p>In Indonesia, USAID will pilot a financial technology solution towards women's economic empowerment alongside the documentation and traceability app currently in use by small-scale buyers and brokers. This activity operates on the assumption that increased access to financial tools will result in better fisheries data, improved livelihoods for women fisherfolk, and ultimately better fisheries management.</p>	<p><a href="#">Financing Fisheries Change: Learning from Case Studies (MANTA Consulting, Inc.)</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Role of Trust in Increasing Women's Access to Finance Through Digital Technologies (USAID)</a></p>

INTERVENTION	DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR	EXAMPLE SUCCESS STORIES	AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND TOOLS
<p>Introduce more efficient and healthier harvesting and/or processing technologies</p>	<p>Support the design and roll out of technologies that are wanted, and can be used and maintained easily by women</p>	<p>Tradition and/or women's limited knowledge of the health implications of existing methods may affect adoption of new technologies</p>	<p>In Côte d'Ivoire, a European Union and FAO project on sustainable livelihoods provided women fish smokers with processing technologies that are more time efficient and safer for respiratory health. As a result, the improved quality of the fish products now meet European Union health requirements, with imports currently valued at US\$ 1.7 million annually. It also solved food loss that was previously prevalent and reducing other environmental impacts relating to traditional smoking methods that used firewood and charcoal burning.</p>	<p><a href="#">Applications of the FTT-Tiaroye fish smoking and drying technology (FAO)</a></p>
				<p><a href="#">Training for Fish Quality Improvement: Training Needs Analysis (FAO)</a></p>

INTERVENTION	DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR	EXAMPLE SUCCESS STORIES	AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND TOOLS
<p>Conduct communications activities that are geared towards, designed for, and accessible to women</p>	<p>Identify how women access and communicate information</p> <p>Develop communications and outreach programs that take into account existing social networks, literacy rates, language, and preferred communications platforms</p>	<p>Low literacy rates and/or understanding of official language</p> <p>Low access to communications technologies</p> <p>Social norms may dictate that women cannot participate in spaces where information is shared (i.e. community meetings, religious spaces)</p>	<p>In Senegal, women fish processors organized to develop a code of ethics to govern their trade, including regulations and hygienic processing techniques. Due to high illiteracy, many were unable to read and adopt the code. USAID project staff translated the code into song lyrics, dances, and folklore—thereby enabling women to understand and memorize the code.</p>	<p><a href="#">USAID Collaborative Management for a Sustainable Fisheries Future (COMFISH) project</a></p> <p><a href="#">Gender Responsive Communication for Development: Guidance Tools and Resources (UNICEF)</a></p>
<p>Promote women's use of information and communications technologies (ICT)</p>	<p>Conduct baseline studies to understand the efficacy of an ICT intervention</p> <p>Conduct trainings for women to improve technical literacy (i.e. how to use digital finance services)</p> <p>Introduce mobile applications to identify fish species, refer customers, or to inform price-setting</p>	<p>Inconsistent or low access to energy to power devices</p> <p>Inability to afford and/or access ICT products</p> <p>Poor network quality and coverage</p>	<p>On Lake Victoria, after women fish processors and traders began to use mobile phones to attract and negotiate with brokers outside their community, the prices of the <i>omena</i> fish species increased by 20%.</p>	<p><a href="#">Gender and Information Communication Technology (ICT) Survey Toolkit (USAID)</a></p> <p><a href="#">The USAID Center for Digital Development (CDD)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Guide to the Use of Digital Financial Services in Agriculture (USAID)</a></p>

DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR	EXAMPLE SUCCESS STORIES	AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND TOOLS	
<p>Increase women's effective and active participation in leadership and decision making, paying attention to intersecting power dynamics around race, ethnic group, age, etc.</p>	<p>Establish a target percentage (i.e. 25-35%) of women's representation in decision-making bodies</p> <p>Identify and alleviate barriers to women's participation</p> <p>Sensitize men to respect and support women leaders</p> <p>Provide leadership and skill-building training for women civil society members, women's organizations, etc.</p>	<p>Social norms dictating how men and women can interact</p> <p>Men's disregard for women's input and voices</p> <p>Household responsibilities (i.e. childcare) may limit women's availability to attend meetings</p> <p>Financial constraints to pay fees/dues to an organization</p>	<p>In Cambodia, women in a community fisheries committee advocated for more financial transparency in accounting and decision making, as well as for improved conflict management between offenders and enforcers of illegal fishing.</p>	<p><a href="#">Women's Participation and Leadership in Fisherfolk Organizations and Collective Action in Fisheries: A Review of Evidence on Enablers, Drivers and Barriers (FAO)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Women's Participation in Community Fisheries Committees in Cambodia (Roskilde University)</a></p>

INTERVENTION	DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR	EXAMPLE SUCCESS STORIES	AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND TOOLS
<p>Ensure women's access rights and address discriminatory marine tenure security laws/customary systems</p> <p>Build capacity of local civil society and women's organizations to advocate for women's equal tenure rights and recognition in governance processes</p>	<p>Conduct trainings for women and men to understand their rights under local, national, and international laws/conventions, and to understand appropriate enforcement and grievance mechanisms</p> <p>Build capacity of local civil society and women's organizations to advocate for women's equal tenure rights and recognition in governance processes</p>	<p>Women's limited understanding of existing laws, legal frameworks, and sustainable resource use practices</p> <p>Local governance and enforcement do not adhere to existing laws and legal frameworks</p> <p>Women's lack of trust to report grievances to local enforcement and/or fear of retaliation</p> <p>Women may face challenges in collectively organizing</p>	<p>In Nicaragua, USAID supported members of a women's cooperative to advocate for exclusive rights from the government to harvest cockles. After being granted a concession to harvest in a certain area and receiving trainings on marketing and entrepreneurship, the women have transformed their cheaply sold raw cockles into high-value appetizers, increasing the value of their products by 1,100%. As a result, by selling a higher value-added product, the women received a greater income from harvesting fewer cockles. Working together with the cooperative, USAID support aided the completion of reforestation work and repopulating cockles by planting and raising juvenile species.</p>	<p><a href="#">USAID Regional Program for the Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives</a> Women's cooperative (<i>El Rosario</i>) case study can be found on <a href="#">p. 30</a></p> <p><a href="#">Marine Tenure and Small-Scale Fisheries: A Sourcebook on Good Practices and Emerging Themes (USAID)</a></p>

INTERVENTION	DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR	EXAMPLE SUCCESS STORIES	AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND TOOLS
<p>Promote access to trainings for women and men on GBV and sensitize men to reduce violence</p> <p>Form women's community organizations to resist violence within families and strengthen men's support groups to ameliorate GBV drivers and social norms</p> <p>Provide health services and counseling for HIV positive patients</p>	<p>Raise awareness of authorities and community leaders about the existing dangers of 'sex-for-fish' transactions</p> <p>Ineffective or complicit law enforcement</p> <p>Survivors at risk for poor mental health, substance abuse, and HIV sexual risk behaviors</p>	<p>The persistent social and structural inequalities between women and men, as well as shifts in power dynamics between them, that create vulnerable conditions</p> <p>In coastal Vietnam, an initiative works with fishermen to stop violence against their wives by establishing a "Responsible Men Club." Through the Club, the men receive knowledge, skills, mentoring, and peer support which enables them to develop positive ideas about masculinity and their role in their communities.</p>		<p><a href="#">Strategy to Prevent and Response to Gender-Based Violence Globally (USAID)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Fisheries Gender and Youth Analysis of Four Major Lakes in Malawi (USAID)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality (UNFPA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Considering Gender: Practical Guidance for Rural Development Initiatives in Solomon Islands</a></p>



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section outlines recommendations USAID staff, stakeholders, and implementers—as well as multilateral actors, development agencies and funds, philanthropic foundations, researchers, and other practitioners—can consider when working with specific types of stakeholders. These recommendations demonstrate that equitable and efficient wild-caught fisheries depends heavily upon the collective engagement and action of stakeholders from across governments, implementing organizations, the private sector, local governance, and community decision-making organizations.

### NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

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- Officially recognize nearshore harvesting and processing as fishing activities in policies, programs, and regulations, and track and monitor data on nearshore harvesting and processing at the community and national levels;
  - Collect accurate sex-disaggregated data related to fishing activities along the value chain to inform policies and programs;
  - Recognize and protect legitimate tenure rights (marine and inland)—paying special attention to women's tenure rights, in policies and mandates;
  - Train local authorities and organizations to effectively enforce local grievance systems to protect women's tenure rights and for dispute resolution;
  - Design and promote social safety nets (e.g. social security, insurance) for women fishers;
  - Establish and train gender focal points to develop internal institutional frameworks, trainings, and gender policies, as well as to provide input to other relevant ministries' and stakeholders' gender programming;
  - Liaise with ministries of gender and/or women's affairs to increase their understanding of the fisheries sector and why gender matters in fisheries and fisheries management—including to effectively mitigate and respond to GBV; and
  - Elevate women's participation in decision- and policy-making processes at the local and national levels by consulting women's fishery organizations.
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### LOCAL GOVERNANCE / COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING ORGANIZATIONS

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- Effectively enforce local grievance systems to protect women's tenure rights and to resolve disputes, adapting grievance systems if necessary to be more gender-responsive;
  - Strengthen local women's groups and cooperatives, which act as support systems for sustainable fisheries management, business development, education, information sharing, and policy change;
  - Encourage women's participation in local decision making to ensure women's unique and differentiated needs are acknowledged and integrated;
  - Address and mitigate GBV by:
    - Raising awareness to authorities and community leaders about the existing danger of sex-for-fish transactions;
    - Forming women's community organizations to resist violence within families and communities, and/or strengthening men's support groups to understand and ameliorate GBV drivers and social norms;
    - Demanding comprehensive government measures (e.g. adequate and safe public transport) to reduce violence against women in public spaces; and
  - Support access to business opportunities and improved working conditions for women vendors at local markets.
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## IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATIONS

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- Conduct gender analyses to identify critical gender equality and women's empowerment issues and interventions to ensure that projects and programs are addressing gender equality issues, concerns, and opportunities;
  - Consult and engage a wide range of stakeholders, including women's cooperatives and community fishing organizations, when designing project or program activities;
  - Empower women in fishery cooperatives or other organizations to act as leaders, mentors, and trainers of other women by:
    - Identifying country-specific cultural and gender-related barriers women face to ensure community-level activities address relevant pathways toward empowerment;
    - Implementing robust leadership training and capacity building where women can share knowledge, develop skills, learn about their rights, and take part in coaching/mentorship;
    - Fostering the formation of women's organizations throughout all levels of the fisheries value chain to professionalize women's activities and empower women professionals;
  - Fund and encourage the development of, access to, and adoption of improved technologies—such as efficient fish smokers—to reduce women's workloads, resulting in a more efficient business model that results in higher profits with lower catch;
  - Design financial services to meet women's diverse and differentiated needs and address access barriers to increase income and return on investments through sustainable business practices, such as through:
    - Promoting women's access to their own bank savings accounts to give them financial autonomy and control;
    - Establishing microfinance schemes—such as community revolving funds—to expand women's businesses;
    - Providing guaranteed funds to encourage women's entrepreneurship;
    - Training women in skills such as business management, marketing, and bookkeeping—with a particular focus on sustainable business practices to protect ecosystems and the livelihoods that depend on them;
  - Integrate GBV awareness and prevention strategies into fisheries activities—including gender-sensitive strategies and actions geared toward men; and
  - Develop and track gender indicators in monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure an accurate and holistic measure of progress in reducing gender inequalities.
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## THE PRIVATE SECTOR

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- Collect and track data on demographics and women's participation in the sector—such as sex-disaggregated data on salary gaps, retention, advancement, and senior leadership roles;
  - Refer to successes in other sectors—such as energy—on the linkages between women in management and leadership positions and improved sustainable business outcomes, and then conduct research to build the case in the fisheries sector, where they exist;
  - Noting that women are often the first buyers and processors of fish, work with women to improve traceability;
  - Promote safe working environments—free from exploitation, discrimination, and harassment—that respect women's and men's human rights and welfare;
  - Develop human resource policies to promote equal pay and gender-responsive working conditions—such as maternity and paternity leave and access to social benefits;
  - Improve transparency and information flows among various stakeholders across the value chain—such as information on fisheries regulations, technological advances, changes in pricing, and information on suppliers/buyers;
  - Encourage women and men working in the sector to act as mentors, sponsors, champions, and ambassadors for women, gender equality, and women's empowerment; and
  - Provide trainings and professional development opportunities to strengthen marketing, financial, technical, and/or leadership skills.
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# RESOURCES

## DOCUMENTS AND CASE STUDIES

- Allison, H. (2013). “Maritime masculinities and why they matter for management.” Presentation. University of East Anglia. Available [here](#).
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- United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Ghana. (2016). *Sustainable fisheries management project (SFMP)*. Gender mainstreaming in fisheries management: a training manual. Available [here](#).
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- United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2018). *Gender Research in Fisheries and Aquaculture: A Training Handbook*. Available [here](#).
- The World Bank, The Global Women’s Institute of the George Washington University, and the Inter-American Development Bank. (2015). *Finance Against Women and Girls: Finance and Enterprise Development Brief*. Available [here](#).
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF). (2012). *Fisheries Management and Gender*. Available [here](#).
- WorldFish. (2018). *Gender and fisheries: Do women support, complement or subsidize men’s small-scale fishing activities?* Available [here](#).

## WEBSITES AND VIDEOS

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) website on “Flsheries and Aquaculture-Gender”: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/topic/16605/en>
- GenderAquafish.org: <https://www.genderequality.genderaquafish.org>
- Kleiber, D. (2018). “Counting the Invisible.” Video. ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies. At: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fjx\\_MgO8tYU&t=1033s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fjx_MgO8tYU&t=1033s)
- International Association for Women in the Seafood Industry (WSI): <https://wsi-asso.org>
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Gender “Knowledge Center”: <http://genderandenvironment.org/sector/fisheries/>
- CGIAR Research Program on Fish Agri-Food Systems: <https://fish.cgiar.org/stories/why-gender-equality-matters-fisheries-and-aquaculture>





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