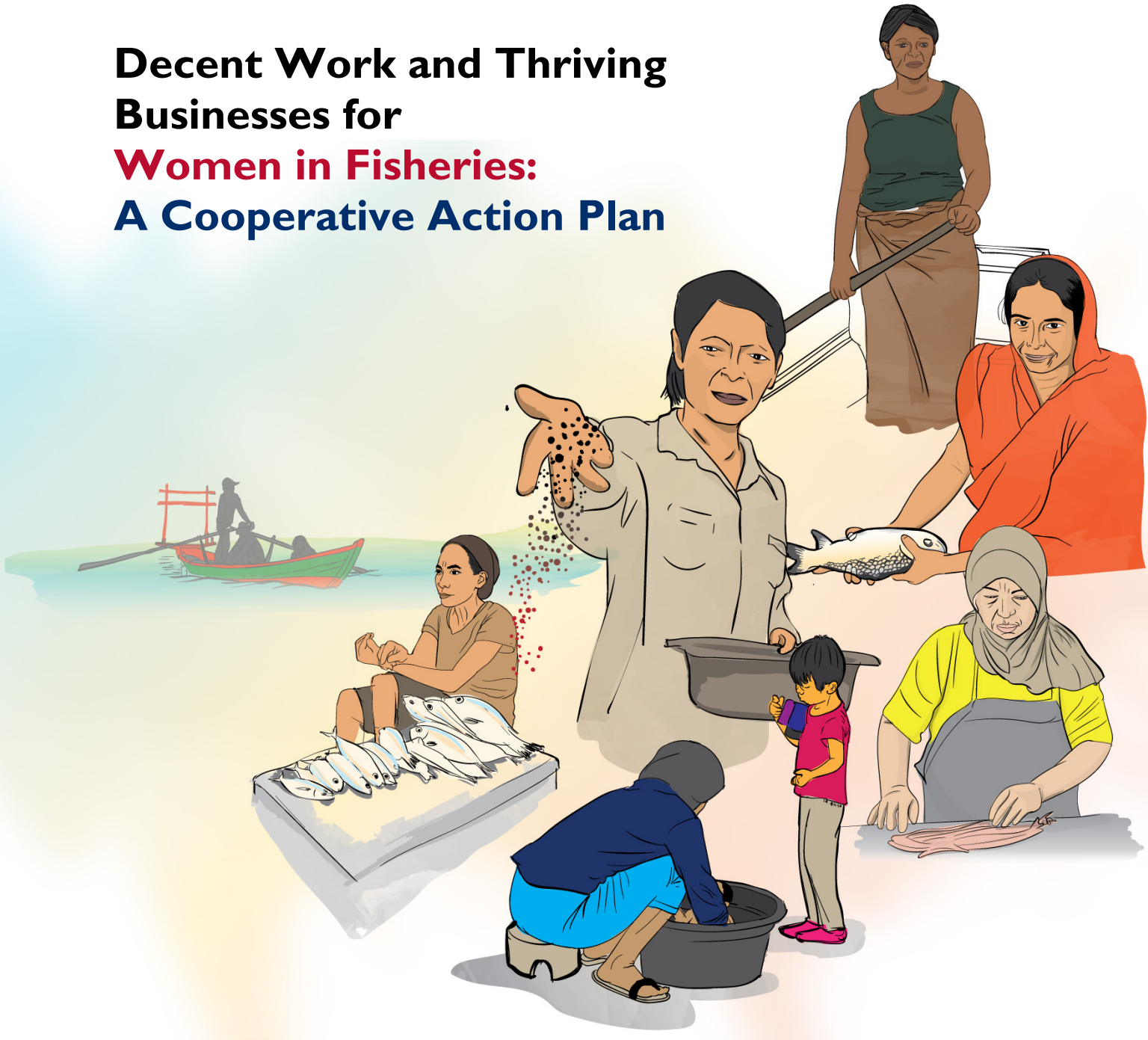


Decent Work and Thriving Businesses for Women in Fisheries: A Cooperative Action Plan



**CORAL TRIANGLE
INITIATIVE**
ON CORAL REEFS, FISHERIES
AND FOOD SECURITY



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ACRONYMS

3Ds	difficult, dangerous, and dirty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIFT	Central Institute of Fisheries Technology
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSO	civil society organization
CTI-CFF	Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FAO-RAP	FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
GAF8	8 th Global Symposium on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries
GAFS	Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section
GESI	gender equality and social inclusion
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
ILO	International Labour Organization
IUU	illegal, unreported, unregulated
LCD	Local Capacity Development
NGO	nongovernmental organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center
SOFTI	Society of Fisheries Technologists India
SUFIA	Sustainable Fish Asia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VG-SSF	Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication

PREFACE

Most studies on women’s labor in fisheries describe the gender-based divisions of labor that exist for women and men across different value chains. A few in-depth studies have looked at the status of women working in shrimp and fish processing industries, and more rarely, as traders and business entrepreneurs. But as fisheries and aquaculture undergo rapid changes, women’s labor issues remain under-prioritized and under-investigated. Women are rarely included in formal fisheries statistics or mentioned as part of key topics, such as ending forced labor at sea; countering illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; sustainable fisheries discussions; and, most troublingly, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) relief action. Women’s total labor contributions include not only their productive labor in the workforce and as business entrepreneurs, but also their reproductive and care labor in households, communities, society, and for the environment. Much of women’s labor is still to be revealed and quantified, and the means found for empowering women to secure decent work and thriving businesses.

On November 29, 2021, the webinar “*Women Work in Fisheries, Too!*” was held to discuss activities that could help women flourish in Asian fisheries work. As part of the 8th Global Symposium on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF8), the webinar was co-organized by the USAID Sustainable Fish Asia Local Capacity Development Activity (SUFIA LCD); Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section (GAFS) of the Asian Fisheries Society; Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF); Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT); and the Society of Fisheries Technologists India (SOFTI).

These partners’ interests came together in this Cooperative Action Plan. The GAFS is a professional society, focused on gender research and related activities, that helps advocate the advancement of women in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. USAID SUFIA LCD focuses on organizational capacity development of regional fisheries organizations and encouraging private sector engagement and investments for sustainable fishing and addressing labor abuses along the fisheries value chains. One of CTI-CFF’s objectives is to raise awareness of women’s contributions in fisheries and marine biodiversity conservation, using gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) integration approaches. Its GESI policy aims to reduce disparities and help create more equal opportunities through greater cooperation across sectors. In its fisheries research and development work, ICAR-CIFT recognizes that women are vital in marketing and fish processing, comprising a large workforce that is often not well organized to advocate for better outcomes.

Initial drafts of this Cooperative Action Plan were developed by a diverse team of gender fisheries experts, in advance of the webinar (**Annex B**), who were invited for their expertise in fisheries and gender research in South and Southeast Asia and Pacific countries, socioeconomics, extension and human welfare, fisheries data systems, and fisheries policy analysis. An outline of the Plan was presented at the webinar, with preliminary feedback sought and incorporated before a draft was sent for open consultation and then finalized.

Through this Plan, over the next 5 years, we hope to encourage a much deeper understanding of women’s labor in fisheries, while fostering decent work and thriving opportunities for women across the Asia-Pacific fisheries sector. This could be a game changer when the recommendations are put into action.

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INTRODUCTION

Asia-Pacific fisheries and aquaculture produce the majority (70%) of the world's aquatic products, providing nourishing food on a global scale and supporting more than 50 million workers in the primary producing value chain nodes along with tens of millions more workers in the secondary processing, services, and trading nodes. In Asia, women make up 18% of workers in the primary (production) node but in other nodes, where three to four times as many people are employed, women outnumber men. In fish processing and marketing for both industrial and small-scale fisheries, for example, more women than men work. Few countries maintain good gender-disaggregated data, but available data indicate that women constitute a larger share of fish workers in the Asia-Pacific than in any other global region. Their labor supports the economy, their households, and communities. Gender studies have revealed, however, that much of women's labor is precarious, low paid or unpaid, and frequently unrecognized.

Although women's labor is economically and socially important, it receives little attention in fisheries policies and support programs. In the fisheries sector, international and national labor laws focus mainly on work at sea, which is carried out chiefly by men. These fisheries-specific laws do not address women's work in the onshore nodes of fisheries value chains. This labor presumably is covered by more general labor laws that are not tailored to the particulars of the sector. Labor laws for both offshore and onshore work often lack enforcement to protect workers. The needs of employers, with their greater economic and political weight, tend to be favored. Workers' unions are weak or lacking and many workers' interests, including women's, are not represented. Women's and men's fisheries labor issues also frequently include complex matters such as those of domestic and transboundary migrant workers. Many women work in the informal sector, not covered by labor laws and regulations.

In addition to insufficient attention to women's direct productive fisheries¹ labor along the value chains, little attention is paid to women's considerable labor in the reproductive and care realm, including in the household and community, and in sustainable natural resources management. Again, gender studies provide ample evidence of women's disproportionate workloads in housework, rearing children, caring for the elderly, community duties, and environmental stewardship at the practical level, such as mangrove planting.

The Plan recognizes the integral nature of women's productive, reproductive, and care work. Women working in fisheries usually also carry a greater burden than men for reproductive and care

Recognizing the lack of attention to women's labor throughout all aspects of fisheries, this Cooperative Action Plan (the Plan) presents a guide for addressing gender and labor issues in Asia-Pacific fisheries and aquaculture. It focuses on women's labor and business opportunities, recognizing that women are not a homogeneous category and their needs vary according to their working situations, life stages from youth to elderly, ethnicity, education, social and economic positions, and immigrant status, among other things. The Plan identifies key issues or themes for action and provides articles giving guidance for addressing these. The agencies that are recommended to take up the action, and possible partnerships and collaborations, are indicated.

In the Plan, workers include those who are self-employed; entrepreneurs; those working for firms and other private and public enterprises; and those who work either full-time, part-time, or are hired seasonally. They encounter a range of work conditions that vary with the work they do and who they are. A worker's gender often has an important bearing on the segments of a value chain in which they may work, the types of work they may do, and the overall business opportunities afforded them.

¹ In this Cooperative Action Plan, we refer predominantly to the workers in the fisheries sector and do not expand on aquaculture. However, in many nodes of the value chains, workers experience conditions similar to those in fisheries value chains, therefore making many of the recommended activities relevant to workers in aquaculture value chains.

work. This includes unrecorded and under-recognized labor in childcare, household responsibilities, and multiple forms of labor in support of their communities and/or kinship groups. In Asia and the Pacific, women do four times more unpaid care work than men.² Reproductive and care workloads, including participation in community extension services and management meetings, may affect the amount of time women are available to participate in paid work. Such workloads could also limit where women can work and the types of work they can perform.

Women's status and rights in workplaces and in social domains impact their decision-making in households, kinship groups, and local communities. Women's power to make decisions, such as over food provisioning in the household, controlling use of their own income, and sharing in household income they helped earn, are important factors to consider because they can affect the potential benefits from planned interventions.

When women's total labor commitments in the workplace or in the household are not recognized, they bear increased vulnerability and risks of sexual and gender-based violence, workplace harassment, wage gaps, and poverty. In addition, where fish stocks are declining, households may face increased risk of food insecurity, and women's work in food procurement and preparation can be increased.

Two contemporary global threats, climate change and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, have different impacts on women than on men, often increasing women's labor burdens outside paid work and making their paid work more difficult, but also offering some new opportunities. Interventions that target these threats and opportunities must be inclusive and equitable.

Several recent and long-standing international labor laws and voluntary guides address gender equality (see **Exhibit I** and **Annex A**) and could contribute to making fisheries labor laws and guides more gender equitable. International fisheries labor laws such as the 2007 International Labour Organization (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention (C188),³ however, focus on work done on large commercial fishing vessels, carried out mainly by men, and do not address gender equality. The 2014 Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (VG-SSF) was the first international fisheries instrument (legal or voluntary) to include gender equality as a core principle and to refer to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Several of the voluntary 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could relate to gender and labor in fisheries, such as SDG#5 (gender equality), SDG#8 (decent work), and SDG#14 (life below water). None of these, however, is explicitly linked to gender equality in fisheries. For example, SDG#14, which receives the most attention from fisheries agencies and those organizations active in the sector, does not include gender equality in its targets.

Exhibit I. International Laws and Voluntary Guides Relevant to Women and Labor in Fisheries

International Laws	International Voluntary Guides
1951 ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (C100)	2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

² International Labour Organization (ILO). (2018, June 27). *ILO: Women do 4 times more unpaid care work than men in Asia and the Pacific*. Press release online. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/asia/media-centre/news/WCMS_633284/lang--en/index.htm

³ C188, the Work in Fishing Convention, does not address women and women's needs, but indirectly concerns women's work because it addresses labor protections for all who work in fishing.

Exhibit I. International Laws and Voluntary Guides Relevant to Women and Labor in Fisheries

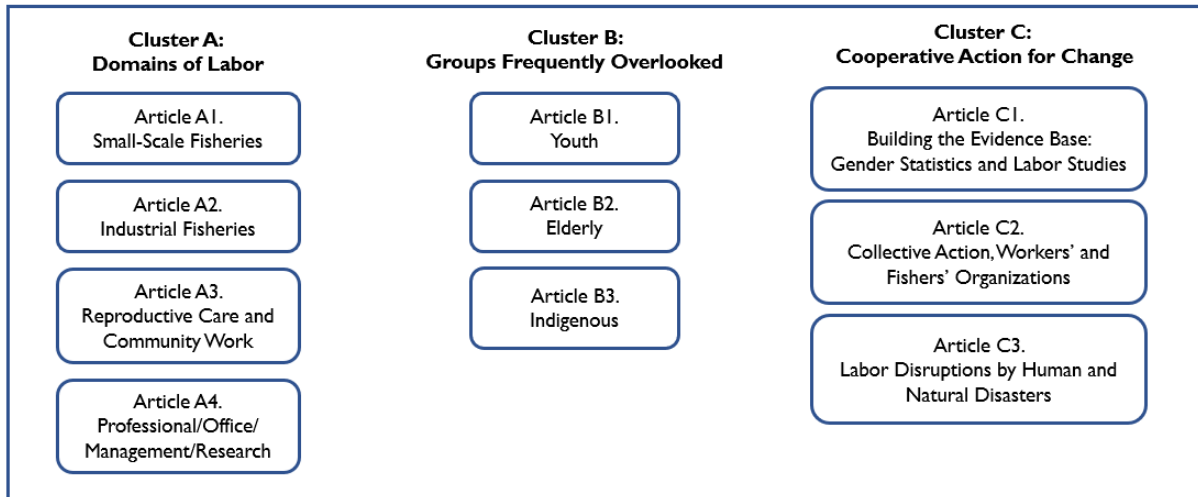
International Laws	International Voluntary Guides
1958 ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (C111)	2011 Women’s Empowerment Principles (UN Women)
1979 CEDAW	2011 United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	2015 SDGs (United Nations), especially #5 (Gender), #8 (Decent Work)
2019 ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (C190)	

This Cooperative Action Plan will provide a roadmap to the fisheries sector (see Target Audience) to make notable sectoral advances toward meeting key gender-related SDGs by 2030 in the Asia-Pacific region. Specific SDGs are #5 (gender equality), #8 (decent work), and #14 (life below water) and social well-being SDGs #1 (no poverty), #2 (zero hunger), #10 (reduced inequalities), #13 (climate action), and #16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions), to aid recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and compliance with various global instruments such as CEDAW, ILO Conventions and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) VG-SSF. While these global instruments are for governments, the private sector has the incentive to comply with and advance national labor laws, business and human rights obligations, and other corporate sustainability frameworks, including national plans of action⁴ for business and human rights obligations, which provide guidance on human rights, especially labor and work rights for companies and workers.

The diagram below shows the types of women and their work mapped out in the Cooperative Action Plan (**Exhibit 2**). Women are not a homogeneous group. The Plan recognizes this by differentiating broad groups of people with different needs for action (**Clusters A and B**) and more generic needs relevant to all groups (**Cluster C**). The groups in Clusters A and B are not mutually exclusive. For **Domains of Labor** (Cluster A), we divide the women’s domains of fisheries labor according to where the work is done, based on the types of fisheries value chains (small-scale, industrial) or work environments (professional office or company or home and community). For **Groups Frequently Overlooked** (Cluster B), special attention is given to the needs of certain groups whose needs may not be fully met by the actions for the majority in each main group. For other categories of women such as self-employed, entrepreneurs, and migrants, their needs are woven into actions under the various labor domains. Thus, we have taken a very intersectional approach, because the types of labor women do are varied, as are the women and their needs.

⁴ Country tracker on national plan of action can be found at <https://globalnaps.org/>.

Exhibit 2. Women and Their Work



GOAL AND OBJECTIVE

Goal

The goal of this Cooperative Action Plan is to contribute to greater regional understanding across stakeholder groups of key labor challenges for women in the fisheries sector and to support regional advancements for gender and just, equitable, and inclusive labor conditions across the Asia-Pacific fisheries sector.

Objective

The objective of this Cooperative Action Plan is to provide strategic direction, guidance, and recommendations to fisheries stakeholders and entities in the Asia-Pacific region in order to achieve the following in 5 years' time:

- **Key target audiences support the adoption of the Plan**, in part or whole, and take action in accordance with its mandates;
- **Women working in productive and reproductive roles in fisheries and aquaculture are given attention**, voice, and strong representation in decision-making roles in policy, sector bodies, and businesses;
- **Gender-based divisions of work in the household involve men and boys in domestic tasks**, giving women and girls more opportunities to engage in strategic activities in the economy and community;
- **The interests and contributions of young women and women in vulnerable groups such as migrants, Indigenous, handicapped, elderly, and other special groups are recognized and represented** in policy and decision-making;
- **Research and development are conducted** to understand the situations and conditions of women and men working in fisheries and aquaculture, including long-term monitoring of gender-related interventions for impact assessments and systematic collection of sex/gender-disaggregated data, intersectional factors, and other relevant qualitative data; and

- **Gendered impacts of current issues such as actions related to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, fisheries management and value chain changes, new business opportunities within and outside the fisheries sector, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic are taken into consideration** and integrated in recovery programs, policies, and interventions.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This Cooperative Action Plan is intended for various audiences depending on the node(s) of the fisheries value chain in which they work. For every Article mentioned below, we have identified partner agencies and groups that have the potential to adopt and further develop the recommended actions. Many of the actions being recommended will require detailed design and practical application to be implemented effectively in different places and context.

ARTICLES

The Cooperative Action Plan covers 10 Articles grouped into three Clusters: **Cluster A** comprises the major domains of women's fisheries labor; **Cluster B** addresses the needs of groups of women and girls who are frequently overlooked; and **Cluster C** comprises fundamental measures for building a solid platform for action. During the open consultation of the draft of the Cooperative Action Plan, several suggestions were made to increase the numbers of groups addressed in Cluster B. Because several of the suggested groups, such as the disabled, are lacking a knowledge base in fisheries to enable us to define actions, we chose to make reference to obtaining more information on these groups in articles under Cluster C.

CLUSTER A: DOMAINS OF FISHERIES LABOR

Article AI. Small-Scale Fisheries Value Chains

Description

The small-scale fishing village community often operates as an intergenerational network of fishing households. Women undertake a wide range of productive labor in small-scale fisheries, from fishing (including foot fishing or gleaning) and fish farming through to processing and trading. Often, this labor is not recognized as making an economic contribution. Many women themselves consider their roles as just an extension of their household duties. However, millions of women also manage their own small- and medium-scale fisheries enterprises throughout the value chains, although not all of these enterprises are registered and counted in official statistics. The 2014 FAO VG-SSF recognized the importance of women in small-scale fisheries and promoted gender equality as a core principle. The first global effort to estimate the level of engagement of women in small-scale fisheries, i.e., *Illuminating Hidden Harvests*,⁵ will be published in 2022. This report will serve as a new baseline for information on small-scale fisheries and provide material for awareness raising, and guidance on key

⁵ *Illuminating Hidden Harvests* is a study that aims to provide evidence of key social, nutritional, environmental, economic, and governance contributions of small-scale fisheries at global and local scales to support the implementation of the FAO VG-SSF and achievement of multiple SDGs. A brief on the study is available at <https://www.fao.org/3/cb2879en/CB2879EN.pdf>

focus areas and knowledge gaps. Activities focused on young and elderly women, and Indigenous women, are addressed in Cluster B.

Outcome

Greater formal recognition of women’s labor roles and challenges leading to improved labor and business conditions of women in small-scale fisheries and improved uptake of the gender equality provisions of the VG-SSF.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1: Raised awareness and formal recognition of the many productive roles of women in small-scale fisheries and new commitments by key actors to improve women’s labor conditions

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Activity 1. | Promote widely to the fisheries and development community the gender results of the <i>Illuminating Hidden Harvests</i> study. |
| Activity 2. | Key actors commit to change and develop action plans based on the findings and recommendations for women’s labor from <i>Illuminating Hidden Harvests</i> . Conduct surveys or consultations with the small-scale fisheries sector about their understanding of women’s labor contributions and what they think are the key challenges and action steps for improvement. |

Outcome 2: Strengthened protection for women in small-scale fisheries through supporting women’s collective organizations, giving them voice in the fisheries processes and assisting them to protect their work rights in small-scale fisheries

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Activity 1. | Community- and locally based management committees to review their representative structure and adjust to include, with full access to decision-making powers, women’s representatives. Where women’s processing and trading is linked to locally produced fish, women’s access rights to raw materials are accorded equal priority to those of other buyers. |
| Activity 2. | Create opportunities for women to engage more actively in strategic activities at the community level. Training for women in financial management, seafood product development, and how to maintain vibrant groups. |
| Activity 3. | Work with local gender experts to address social norms, beliefs, and perceptions about gender roles in management structures, and help women develop their capacity to engage in organizational roles and overcome resistance by others to women’s meaningful participation. |

Outcome 3: Women’s small-scale fishing and fish value chain labor will be empowered by formally recognizing it as legitimate fishing activity that is recorded and given appropriate registration, management, and protection

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Activity 1. | Fisheries agencies and fisheries project developers assess women’s fishing activities, the gears and fishing areas they use, and develop recording, conservation, and management strategies as for other types of fishing. |
| Activity 2. | Recognizing that social hierarchies may be strong in many fishing village communities, resulting in social stratification based on intra- and inter-household material fishing assets ownership, work with women, women’s groups, and local leaders to help ensure that women have legitimate and rewarding access to assets and labor. |
| Activity 3. | Count women undertaking such fishing, including on a part-time basis, in official statistics, so they become eligible for registration as fishers, consulted in decisions that affect them, and made eligible for development programs and relief assistance. |

Outcome 4. Established partnerships and programs supporting technologies, skills, and linkages for women in post-harvest processing and trading

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Activity 1. | Learn from the vulnerabilities of women’s businesses impacted by the natural and human generated emergencies to help women grow resilient businesses. |
| Activity 2. | Develop training on creating good-quality, attractive products and on marketing products profitably. |
| Activity 3. | Consider opportunities to form cooperatives/associations of women in fisheries and determine financial needs to improve quality and quantity of production and options to secure value chain financing. |
| Activity 4. | Through poverty eradication interventions, support women laboring in micro-scale fisheries enterprises at the local levels in becoming more productive and better remunerated. |

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

FAO-Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP); FAO; Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division (Pacific Community); USAID; other development assistance agencies, national and regional fisheries agencies, Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section (GAFS), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) supporting local action, and civil society organizations (CSOs); fisheries cooperatives, small-scale fisheries owners, and other key decision-makers in small-scale fishing communities; and academia engaged in research and education relevant to gender and small-scale fisheries

Article A2. Industrial Fisheries Value Chains

Description

Women work all along the industrial fisheries value chains, from upstream industries in pre-harvest (e.g., fishing gears, fishing vessel provisioning, production [fishing]) and post-harvest work such as in processing factories and fresh and processed fish markets. The relative number of women workers varies greatly across value chain nodes and from place to place. For example, women are much less common onboard industrial-scale fishing vessels (larger mechanized fishing vessels with or without an onboard processing facility) than in processing factories. The challenges that women workers face, however, are similar across jobs. They include lack of respect, differential wages, weak negotiating power, lack of gender-sensitive infrastructure, poor access to fish in primary markets like harbors, poor access to credit and finance for investments, and poor knowledge of and access to state-sponsored schemes and programs. Women lack opportunities for upgrading their skills, and this is one of the major reasons for their lack of negotiating power and poor access to leadership positions. Women often have severe constraints of time due to their reproductive and care responsibilities, limiting their economic and social participation and time to further their work-related short-term or long-term goals. Work-related occupational safety and health aspects like the repetitive nature of jobs, drudgery, injuries, violence, and the need for safe accommodation and transport are often not reported and thus escape scrutiny and correction. Often pay scales are low and the work seasonal and insecure, resulting in women workers facing welfare challenges despite being employed. Many aquatic product processing factories are heavily dependent on migrant women's labor (both national and across borders), raising domicile issues. In industrial fisheries value chains, concerns must be acknowledged explicitly by key stakeholders and clear guidelines developed to ensure safe and just work spaces for women, including migrant women. Additional activities to assist young migrant women are in Article 5, and on the collection of data and evidence in Article 8.

Outcome

Greater dignity, welfare, opportunities, and protection for women workers in industrial fisheries value chains through gender-sensitive policies, improved and safe working conditions, and equal access to opportunities.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Fisheries agencies and private sector businesses increase their awareness of issues of women working in industrial fisheries

Activity 1.	Raise awareness in state fisheries agencies and fisheries businesses of the particular needs of women in industrial fisheries workplaces in order to get their needs addressed.
Activity 2.	Research and document the jobs carried out by women in each node of the industrial fisheries value chains (pre-harvest, harvest, post-harvest) and how these affect workers' welfare, health and safety, product quality, and sales through field level studies, regular census surveys, and reviews of how labor regulations are applied.
Activity 3.	Increase women's representation in policy-making and leadership in government agencies, the private sector, and worker's organizations.
Activity 4.	Promote women-friendly regulations, monitoring and reporting, enhancing employment conditions to benefit both workers and firms.
Activity 5.	Using existing cases and finding effective incentives including from other sectors, develop, with the private sector, options to encourage companies to develop proactive gender activities and to be receptive to and participate in external gender auditing.
Activity 6.	Raise awareness about national regulations and entitlements and international standards among employers and national governments.
Activity 7.	Lobby for and support government policy and regulations that protect the rights of migrant workers, which are often a source of vulnerability (e.g., limiting workers' ability to change employers, pathways for permanent residency, etc.).
Activity 8.	Investigate employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women in fisheries to produce position papers and inform women-friendly policies and services.
Activity 9.	Investigate and address gender-based violence in factories, markets, and other value chain nodes and ensure that women working in the industrial fisheries have access to support over such violence outside work, such as by training and access to safe houses.

Outcome 2. Improved and more accessible data on women's employment and, with appropriate privacy protections, on key women's issues in industrial fisheries value chains

Activity 1.	On a regular basis, fisheries and statistical agencies collect authoritative gender-disaggregated data on employment numbers in different activities in industrial fisheries value chains, the gender pay gap, occupational health and safety including hygienic toilet facilities and workplace health policies; affordable childcare for women; build qualitative and quantitative data on incidence and risks of gender-based violence and harassment in factories as baseline for tracking changes, remediation, and action.
Activity 2.	Through promoting successful case studies from seafood and other companies, encourage companies to use a gender lens in human resources strategies to improve their organizational culture to be more inclusive and in so doing improve productivity, reduce absenteeism, turnover, etc.

Outcome 3. Women working in industrial fisheries value chains understand and are able to claim their rights to decent work

Activity 1.	Create awareness among women workers in industrial fisheries value chains on what rights they are entitled to with respect to their jobs, as well as how their gender rights are assured in legal instruments, including the rights of association, through campaigns, meetings, workshops, and training programs.
Activity 2.	Ensure that women workers are aware of opportunities for and have access to skills upgrading and information on access to resources like credit.
Activity 3.	Increase awareness of gender-based violence and training for all staff—what it is, how to spot it, how to react, and how to prevent it. Set up a safe grievance mechanism where cases of gender-based violence can be reported.
Activity 4.	Engage food manufacturers/processors in learning how to better involve and support women in their workforce, improve their working experience, and improve employee engagement so as to foster two-way communication and better resolution of issues. Conduct a gap analysis including on the gender pay gap, and recommend how to integrate better opportunities for women, using experience from workers and companies that have diversified the work performed by women and men.

Outcome 4. Migrant women workers, whether from the host country or other countries, are treated fairly and given full access to their labor rights and decent work

- Activity 1.** Employers ensure that all migrant women’s employment is fully formalized through contracts and registration with state labor and migration agencies. States and CSOs encourage employers to publish their job and pay information locally to provide greater transparency of opportunities to potential employees.
- Activity 2.** State, CSO, and welfare agencies educate migrant women workers on labor rights and help empower them to negotiate with employers on contracts.
- Activity 3.** States and CSOs encourage networking among migrant women and help create the conditions for collective action, including possible union membership such as that promoted under the ILO’s tripartite (governments, employers, workers) structure.
- Activity 4.** In cases where migrant workers are accompanied by their children, facilitate access to local education for the school-age children and access to childcare for young children.

Outcome 5. Partnerships among workers, employers, and parties interested in improving women’s labor status become more effective

- Activity 1.** Ensure cross-learning and sharing of evidence nationally and internationally for arriving at gender-sensitive policies.
- Activity 2.** Leverage institutional goals for gender-related policy development.
- Activity 3.** Partner for development and research project formulation and implementation with a central focus on gender.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

State fisheries, labor and statistical ministries, labor unions, relevant industries, private sector partners, NGOs, academia, women’s welfare agencies, fisheries cooperative societies, ministries, media, fisheries development and export agencies; banks and technical support institutions

Article A3. Reproductive and Care Labor: Household, Community, Environment, and Climate

Description

If women have potential productive roles in fisheries, and are proactively engaged in community work, then their reproductive and care workload must be shared at home, rather than leaving them overwhelmed by double or triple burdens. In all societies, women are expected to carry the major load of reproductive and care labor, including in their roles in reproduction and nurturing their offspring to adulthood and caring for the old, weak, sick, and infirm. Women in the fisheries sector are no exceptions. Women in fisher families often marry and bear children at an early age while men’s roles are more focused as active providers of capital and economic security for the household. In some societies, domestic violence and abuse against women in fisher families is accepted as normal and not discussed in social debate. In households without a senior man member, single, widowed women and women as *de facto* household heads have to reconcile their dual home maker and breadwinner roles. Fisherwomen have been the traditional custodians of economically important seaweed, collectors of fish seeds for aquaculture, in the forefront of replanting mangroves, and acting as weather cocks for announcing inclement as well as favorable weather for fish processing and fish drying activities. Fisherwomen are particularly vulnerable to climate extremities and climate changes because they have limited access to land, social capital, and ownership of

resources. Social and governance initiatives are needed for improving women’s agency in family, community, environment, and climate change realms; shifting gender roles in households to better accommodate women; sharing domestic work; and bringing monetary rewards for certain unpaid labor. Additional activities concerning data collection and the evidence base are given in Article 8.

Outcome

Promising and better quality of life for fisherwomen through their enhanced capacity to view themselves as important social and economic contributors, and acceptance of women as equal partners in the development process and egalitarian contributors at home, in the workplace and communities.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Quality of gender-disaggregated databases for reproductive and care labor collected by agencies and organizations is improved	
Activity 1.	Collect primary data on the activities and roles of fisherwomen and men in households, e.g., gendered roles in household chores, role reversals, and role shifts in households.
Activity 2.	Collect data on access of women and men health workers to the households of fisher families.
Activity 3.	Encourage long time series collections, over a decade or more, of discreet data on role shifts/reversals.
Outcome 2. Provision of care support and services to fisher communities by national governments is improved	
Activity 1.	Government agencies, encouraged by the evidence base and advocacy, provide basic social services to fishing communities, rather than leaving women without a choice but to assume the full reproductive and care labor.
Activity 2.	In cases of trafficking and forced women’s labor in fisheries, relevant government agencies and NGOs actively raise awareness about laws, women workers’ rights, services and organizations, and help in blacklisting offending labor recruiters and assisting repatriation of both internal and cross-border migrant workers.
Outcome 3. Agencies and organizations increase their efforts to reach out, work with, and educate fisher families through times of social change with a view to social transformation	
Activity 1.	Fisheries experts, researchers, and development workers conduct respectful and ethical interviews in households; interview elders and older members of households (both women and men); and interview children within fisher households to understand roles and responsibilities assigned to girls and boys.
Activity 2.	Organize campaigns, drama, role plays, and pantomimes with gender transformative themes in selected fishing villages and harbors or fish ports, involving women, men, and young people, to trigger positive change in gender relations by creating large scale awareness, highlighting and portraying the significant roles played by women in households as well as connecting to environment and climate change phenomena.
Activity 3.	Use social transformation to promote reproductive work for men to challenge gender inequalities for women at home.
Activity 4.	Promote and extend formal education as an essential tool for empowering women and enhancing their capacities in social transformation.
Activity 5.	Support social networking and liaison with government, institutional agencies, and NGOs.
Outcome 4. Women and men from fishing households improve their knowledge and understanding about the forced labor and trafficking risks and increase their engagement in outreach strategies to prevent illegal labor and other illegal fishing activities	
Activity 1.	Actively reach out to and include women in fishing households, as well as men, to help them learn about the risks and high social costs of forced labor and trafficking, the labor laws that apply, and the rights that can be claimed to prevent it.
Activity 2.	Engage women and communities in coordinated efforts to improve the protection and livelihood of fisher households.

Outcome 5. Organizations and stakeholders implement initiatives promoting positive gender norms and mitigating or resolving negative impacts of gendered power relations

Activity 1.	Introduce, through projects, development, and investment activities, diversified livelihoods for women and men, offering them new vistas and opportunities for exploring and experimenting with new avocations and enhancing their capacity in handling capital and managing cash.
Activity 2.	Provide access to more women extension workers for fisherwomen so as to empower them with the latest innovative technologies in fisheries, and co-design with women more suitable technologies and sociotechnical systems for their use, encompassing not just the technologies but the interrelated social, economic, infrastructure, and political factors in their use.
Activity 3.	Enhance adoption and behavior change by using peer influence and peer-to-peer learning and training and showcasing “role models”—examples of women and men who have gone beyond traditional roles in fisheries (“you can’t be what you can’t see”).
Activity 4.	NGOs/CSOs in the fisheries sector help women develop personal self-confidence and self-confidence in household decision-making and at work (improve their agency) and help men become aware of the impacts of their own gendered attitudes and capacity for positive change to overcome harmful gender power relations.

Outcome 6. Women have increased capacities for climate resilience and improved disaster coping strategies and receive more recognition as environmental leaders and caretakers

Activity 1.	Promote women’s involvement in top positions in fishing community committees, cooperatives, and conservation and climate-related groups.
Activity 2.	Increase access by women, youth, and children to education in conservation and climate change; set up village knowledge centers and literacy schools in fishing villages, ensuring that women feature among the staff and leaders.
Activity 3.	Create awareness campaigns on laws of inheritance for women’s groups, such as self-help groups, to convey the facts of their rights, privileges, and access to resources and capital.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

State fisheries agencies, welfare ministries, academia, public health agencies, women’s and community groups, CSOs and NGOs, development agencies, academia, women in fisheries societies including GAFS, state statistical and fisheries agencies

Article A4. Professional Women in Fisheries Management Agencies, Private Sector Fisheries Companies, and in Research and Monitoring

Description

In the public and private sectors in the Asia-Pacific region, women are entering professional and support positions in fisheries and aquaculture agencies and companies in increasing numbers. In many countries, women and men have reached parity or near parity in educational attainment, and thus many women are eligible for professional roles. Also, in most countries, more women are interested in joining the workforce, including in government fisheries agencies and private sector positions. In most countries and with a few notable exceptions, women still tend to be clustered in the lower ranks of staff and management. Most countries have made national commitments to international legal instruments that promise gender equality, such as CEDAW and ILO Conventions C100 (Equal Remuneration) and C111 (Discrimination in Employment and Occupation). Other voluntary guides are also relevant, particularly the UN Women’s Women Empowerment Principles, and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Outcome

The professional workforces of fisheries agencies in the public sector, in private fisheries companies, and in fisheries research and monitoring organizations provide equitable recruitment and promotion opportunities and outcomes for women and men, treating all people justly at work and providing greater company transparency.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Fisheries management agencies, private sector companies, and public and private research and monitoring agencies improve their gender equity status

- Activity 1.** Through workshops, meetings, and other exchanges, harness the lessons learned across fisheries agencies in the public sector, in private fisheries companies, and in fisheries research and monitoring organizations to engage more fisheries agencies and private sector companies in promoting/developing gender equality and inclusion strategies and policies and in providing an overview of how to implement them.
- Activity 2.** Fisheries agencies and private sector companies develop and implement proactive gender equality and inclusion strategies and policies focused on creating a more inclusive recruitment and supportive working environment for women and better access to management and leadership opportunities.
- Activity 3.** Support women and men in the agencies and companies through personal and institutional development efforts to become more self-confident in expressing their thoughts, interests, and experience and encourage them to participate in the workplace. Managers and leaders are coached in how to create safe workplaces for people to contribute freely.

Outcome 2. Organizations and agencies improve their annual gender-disaggregated staffing data collection and reporting annually

- Activity 1.** Design and implement systems for collecting and regularly reporting staffing data at all levels of agencies, in partnership with other state agencies responsible for promoting and monitoring public sector gender equality and inclusion.
- Activity 2.** Calculate and publish gender pay gaps annually for fisheries management agencies, private sector fisheries companies, and in research and monitoring agencies.

Outcome 3. Organizations implement gender budgeting in their annual work planning and budgeting

- Activity 1.** As a regular part of public and private sector organizational budgets, budget a percentage of the total budget for all gender actions. The percentage allocated to gender budgeting will depend upon the severity of the issues; acute social protection issues with complex causes and impacts will require larger gender budgets.
- Activity 2.** Because the definition of gender budgeting itself may vary across agencies and even within some large organizations, for state government ministries and large private sector companies, gender budgeting will need coordinating according to the respective responsibilities of agencies and departments.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

State fisheries agencies, private sector companies; leaders and line managers; financial management and audit authorities within organizations

CLUSTER B: GROUPS FREQUENTLY OVERLOOKED

Article B1. Young Women: Opportunity, Vulnerability

Description

Youth is defined by the United Nations as the transition period between the “dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence.” For youth statistics, the UN uses aged 15 to 24 years,⁶ whereas USAID youth programs involve a broader age range of between 10 and 29 years.⁷ Youth have an immense potential to influence and be affected by change in society, including in fisheries and aquaculture. Issues facing youth, including young women on whom we focus in this Plan, include their access and rights to land and other assets; financial capital and decision-making; making their voices heard; lack of political will to work with youth, and especially young girls; and their still-developing influence, knowledge, and experience. Young women can also be particularly vulnerable to exploitation in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, which includes the practice of child labor, under or low payment in factories, undignified working environments, and sometimes sexual harassment and violence. Some youth, particularly young women and girls, have the perception that work in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture has low status and carries social stigma as being difficult, dangerous, and dirty (3Ds), making the industry unattractive. On the other hand, there is a need to address biases against young women’s skills, for example, banks and financial providers can be skeptical of young women’s entrepreneurial skills. Activities to ensure empowerment of young women (and men) should be developed, including directing investments toward strengthening the capability of youth to improve their entrepreneurial and fisheries data management skills and providing educational opportunities. However, information is lacking on what the young women working in fisheries and aquaculture really want or need, their aspirations and their perceptions on their well-being. Although the activities in this Article are directed at helping young women, many of the ideas are also relevant to young men in the sector.

Outcome

The fisheries sector will provide its young women workers a safe working environment, free from any harassment, an enabling environment for personal growth, and engagement, and improved agency and well-being to prepare them for their future.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Raised awareness among young women and employers of safe and rewarding employment opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture

Activity 1.	Conduct open discussions to set the standards for favorable working environments for youth, particularly young women, giving them a venue to share their aspirations and needs, including wages and safe workplaces, and implement national and international laws and conventions on decent and safe workplaces.
Activity 2.	Men, including male youth, educated about equity and equality for women with whom they currently or may in the future share workplaces.

⁶ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). (n.d.). Definition of Youth Fact Sheet. Online, Available at <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf>

⁷ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). (October 2012). Youth in Development Policy. Realizing the Demographic Opportunity. Washington, DC: USAID. Available at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/Youth_in_Development_Policy_0.pdf

Activity 3. Organize outreach activities to fisheries-vocational schools and coastal communities on the evolving landscape of the fishery value chain, and more awareness of the current situation and the employment and entrepreneurship opportunities it offers.

Activity 4. Offer internships or "school to work" programs at multinational companies, and other private sector companies, and development organizations in fisheries to recruit promising young women candidates, and provide a safe and supportive environment (actively facilitate) for young women to contribute their ideas during meetings and work planning, leading to meaningful participation.

Outcome 2. Improved capabilities of young women in fisheries entrepreneurship, fisheries data management, other relevant technical topics through increased educational attainment, improved knowledge, and learning exchanges

Activity 1. Conduct training for young women on entrepreneurship, including the basics of how to set up and run a business, accessing capital, financial management, fisheries data management, fisheries technology (digital platforms, blockchain in fisheries), fish processing and post-harvest technologies, climate change, and other technical topics.

Activity 2. Provide training and assistance to financial institutions on developing and delivering financial products for youth.

Activity 3. Provide scholarships, educational opportunities in fisheries and exchange programs to deserving and interested young people, ensuring equitable access to young women, including those from households involved in fisheries.

Activity 4. Develop knowledge products such as information handbooks and training manuals on relevant topics that young women can use for their personal growth and skills development.

Outcome 3. Increased involvement of young women including those leading organizations, start-ups, and small and medium enterprises in empowering activities and initiatives

Activity 1. Conduct workshops on GESI in fisheries and aquaculture and other personal and self-development training to increase young women's agency, health, and well-being.

Activity 2. Promote hackathon and seed funding for socially innovative solutions in fisheries and aquaculture where young women are given the opportunities to solve real life issues.

Activity 3. Encourage mentorship and/or intergenerational programs among women-led organizations, start-ups, and small-scale systems with companies, including workshops featuring successful young women entrepreneurs, and set up demonstration centers as incubation hubs for ideas and start-ups.

Outcome 4. Increased understanding and knowledge of the fisheries sector on youth in fisheries (all scales)

Activity 1. Conduct gender analysis of the status of youth and their gender-differentiated perceptions, well-being, needs, and issues in order to address them, contributing to fisheries sector recognition.

Activity 2. Enable young girls, including by relieving them of household work burdens, to continue their formal education and thus increase their future work opportunities.

Activity 3. Encourage young women to organize and create policy dialogues between youth and government, private sector, coastal communities, and non-profit actors in fisheries, leveraging existing platforms led by young change-makers, and developing policy recommendations or designing initiatives to strengthen them.

Outcome 5. The children who accompany migrant women workers, especially girls, have full access to youth services, education, and childcare

Activity 1. States and local authorities ensure, along with employers, that the accompanying children of migrant women workers have access to youth services such as those outlined in other activities in this Article.

Outcome 6. Increased interest, participation, and engagement of young women in the fisheries sector and youth-focused advocacies and interventions

Activity 1. Conduct extension and outreach from academia, fisheries agencies, private sector companies, informal sector, and fishing/coastal communities to reach young women and men employees and residents.

Activity 2. Enable young women to take the lead and create interactive and bite-size content (e.g., infographic, 2 minute video, e-book) about workplace safety and health issues that are relevant to them and to communicate for policy change and action.

Activity 3. Leverage social media platforms such as [Youthtopia](#) to mobilize the younger audience on SDGs.

Activity 4. Promote national and local communication strategies to make the general public more aware of the different kinds of fisheries work for women, such as through profiles on women enterprise owners, managers, and workers.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

Youth groups, ministries of labor and youth, and fisheries agencies, NGOs/CSOs, private sector companies and associations, academia, information technology sector, local governments, finance training centers, fisheries education and technical training institutions, and coastal community committees

Article B2. Elderly

Description

Many elderly people are women, who on average live longer than men, often without social protection for their later age. They are among the most vulnerable of those involved in fisheries and aquaculture labor. Social security safety nets and social security provisions may not reach them, especially if they have not been engaged in the formal workforce during their earlier years. The definition of “elderly” will differ by country and perhaps other factors such as ethnicity and locality. Such specificities should be taken into account when defining the group of people being considered as elderly.

Outcome

The fisheries sector will conduct assessments of the extent of work, welfare, and social needs for elderly women and men; recognize their contributions and needs; and provide support to enable them to lead dignified and productive lives.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Improved quality of reports that assess the numbers, locations, and needs of elderly women and men dependent on the fisheries sector

- Activity 1.** Define the elderly segment of the fisheries population based on relevant national and other intersectional factors.
- Activity 2.** Assess through census, survey, or other means the relevant population of elderly.
- Activity 3.** With appropriate social science tools, assess the current status and needs of the elderly.

Outcome 2. Improved outreach and services to elderly women involved in micro and small-scale value chains by local institutions responsible for social security and protection systems

- Activity 1.** Assist the elderly to connect with existing social security and health services.
- Activity 2.** Encourage fisheries associations to include the elderly and have their elderly women members represented in leadership and governance.
- Activity 3.** Help young women develop a broader view of the world and set of skills beyond just activities in the house and help them equip themselves with protection and insurance for old age.

Outcome 3. Increased engagement of elderly women in fisheries communities in senior-entrepreneurship

- Activity 1.** Engage elderly women in entrepreneurship programs suited to their capabilities to enable them to remain productive.

Activity 2. Provide the elderly support and assistance in accessing financial institutions and financial products for such programs.

Outcome 4. Effective partnerships to promote productive and healthy aging among the elderly established by relevant government and civil society agencies

Activity 1. Engage elderly women and men in healthy aging programs that provide health and social support, including enlisting family and community members of all ages, including the schools.

Activity 2. Engage young women and men in activities with elderly women and men to benefit both in the sharing experiences, e.g., the elderly could be part of selected information, education, and communication campaigns as mentors or storytellers to make them still feel part of the community.

Activity 3. Help elderly women and men share their long accumulated local knowledge of fishing, and the cultural and ecological history of fishing villages and communities, recognizing this intangible asset for heritage and environmental conservation.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

Fisheries federations and associations including NGOs, religious and private sector organizations; FAO, ILO, UN Women, ministries of youth, women, labor, health, education, fisheries, research and training centers; academia, USAID, and other development agencies

Article B3. Indigenous Women

Description

Fisheries are important resources for many Indigenous people, including women, and are a key part of livelihoods and healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food. In addition, traditional practices and fisheries knowledge are an integral part of the identity and culture of Indigenous women and groups. People, especially women whose needs may not be recognized, are greatly affected by changes in their traditional fisheries through environment, development, and technology shifts. Many Indigenous people also work in non-Indigenous operations in fish value chains. Although the rights of Indigenous people are enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, not all states have signed the Declaration, and it is not specific to the rights of Indigenous women and the rights in particular sectors. Indigenous people have often had to fight for the rights to their fisheries territory. Women, as key and influential members of their communities, have often been at the forefront of such actions.

Outcome

Indigenous women, men, and communities will have equal opportunity through fisheries and aquaculture for equitable access to resources, labor, and entrepreneurship opportunities in value chains and equal representation in the policy-making processes.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Indigenous women and their fish value chain labor are recognized and included in reliable data collections

Activity 1. Ensure that Indigenous fisheries rights are recognized, including the rights of Indigenous women. In so doing, the right of Indigenous people to Indigenous territory and aquatic resources, self-determination in the use of these resources, the right to maintain cultural practices and economic

	activity based on aquatic resources, and the right to access capacity development to develop their skills and abilities in fisheries resource management and use will be protected.
Activity 2.	National fisheries and statistical service partners develop systems specific to locations and national situations, consulting with Indigenous people in designing the systems.
Activity 3.	Support Indigenous women and groups to document their fisheries and ecological and environmental knowledge to ensure that this knowledge becomes part of the decision-making process and supports recognition of the women's roles and contributions.
Outcome 2. Strengthened attention to Indigenous women's labor in fisheries, with particular attention to changing conditions	
Activity 1.	In view of major transitions happening to Indigenous fisheries and livelihoods due to economic and social change plus environmental and climate changes, fisheries programs and research should be proactive in reaching out to include and work with Indigenous women in situations where they are affected or could have opportunities.
Activity 2.	Support access by Indigenous women to finances and investment to build their capital for operating their own fisheries businesses.
Activity 3.	Protect and safeguard the rights of Indigenous women and groups through greater respect for traditional practices and fisheries knowledge, and support secure geographical indication tags for traditional fishing methods and processing technologies.
Outcome 3. Indigenous women are empowered through their inclusion and representation in decision-making bodies concerned with relevant fisheries matters	
Activity 1.	Ensure that Indigenous women and their interests are included in relevant decision-making bodies for fisheries activities that concern them.
Activity 2.	Recognizing that unequal power relations may be experienced by Indigenous people, especially women, such as lack of citizenship and other civil rights, provide capacity-building and community empowerment where necessary to support inclusion.
Outcome 4. Productive partnerships among Indigenous women's groups are developed as a means to network, share experiences, and learn from others	
Activity 1.	Establish opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing and collective action among women's Indigenous groups.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

Indigenous communities and organizations, state fisheries agencies and other agencies responsible for Indigenous and women's affairs and women's agencies, women's Indigenous and community groups

CLUSTER C: COOPERATIVE ACTION FOR CHANGE

Article CI. Building the Evidence Base for Action: Gender Statistics and Labor Studies

Description

The issues of gender and labor in fisheries and aquaculture have not been well studied, as indicated by the many activities proposed in the foregoing articles regarding the collection of data and efforts

to comprehend and create awareness of the issues. Although women’s forms of engagement are more often acknowledged in recent times, this typically is done by simple descriptions and standard references to women’s invisibility. Despite the significance of sex-disaggregated and gender data in fisheries and aquaculture, these are not well collected, documented, and shared worldwide. The lack of data consequentially prevents effective formulation and implementation of policy and development program decisions. For example, women and their work are often not being counted in statistics, and women are predominantly reported to be concentrated in the post-harvest/processing nodes of the value chains. The important roles women play alongside men in other nodes are often ignored or unacknowledged.

New labor and social conditions entering into sustainability standards and certification schemes are mainly concerned with men’s labor at sea.⁸ Only the Asian Seafood Improvement Collaborative appears to have made a serious effort to include women’s work in its social and gender standards for fisheries and aquaculture (<http://www.asicollaborative.org/asic-social-and-gender-standard>). Awareness raising is important, but also critical is a strong evidence base for where women and men work, what they do, their rights and power in the fish value chains and how existing social structures, norms, and gender relations aid or create barriers to their rights and empowerment. The evidence base must be built by concerted efforts to collect sex-disaggregated and gender data in labor and undertake research to better understand especially women’s roles, engagement, and needs in the sector.

Outcome

A quantum leap in reliable knowledge of, first, time series of gender statistics (sex-disaggregated and qualitative gender data) for fish value chains on labor engagement, and, second, women’s and men’s work, and the power and gender relations affecting their labor opportunities and benefits.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Improved availability of tools and handbooks for collecting reliable gender data on labor in fisheries and aquaculture value chains	
Activity 1.	FAO, academic and national fisheries, and statistical service partners develop national case studies and tools for collecting quantitative and qualitative data on women’s and men’s engagement and participation across all scales of fisheries operations, women’s economic contribution to the sector, employment conditions overall and with specific examples of fish processors, manufacturers, and traders, and how women are affected by and can support climate change mitigation strategies.
Outcome 2. Strengthened social science and economics research capabilities on women’s labor in fisheries and aquaculture at all scales, locations, and across all nodes of the value chain	
Activity 1.	Regional, national and local gender and fisheries labor studies assess and address the knowledge gaps.
Activity 2.	Fisheries agencies address gendered research and data capacity by training staff and hiring new staff with social science expertise.
Activity 3.	Countries augment reporting on SDG#14, Life Under Water, by adding gender and labor targets adapted from sector-specific SDG#5 targets.

⁸ Finkbeiner, E. M., Fitzpatrick, J., & Yadao-Evans, W. (2021). A call for protection of women’s rights and economic, social, cultural (ESC) rights in seafood value chains. *Marine Policy*, 128 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104482>

Outcome 3. Increased commitments and capability of research agencies in undertaking gender and labor research

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| Activity 1. | Fisheries and other agencies review their mandates and seek permissions and partnerships, where required, to conduct gender and labor research in fisheries and aquaculture. |
| Activity 2. | Governments, intergovernmental agencies, foundations, development assistance donors, and other funding agencies direct substantial funding to social science and economics research on women's labor in fisheries and aquaculture at all scales, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches to generate a solid knowledge base. |
| Activity 3. | Communications campaigns via the media encourage the research agencies to improve their capacity and performance in gender and labor research and disseminate the outcomes widely. |

Outcome 4. Research agencies are sufficiently equipped and funded to conduct longer term quantitative and qualitative research programs on gender and fisheries labor themes that currently suffer from major gaps in knowledge

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| Activity 1. | Undertake studies to gain insights into the extent to which the following groups of people are engaged in or could be engaged in fisheries: women with disabilities, people identifying as non-binary with respect to gender, care takers, people living with HIV/AIDS or in high-risk groups, stateless fishers and highly marginalized groups due to climate change, ethnicity, religion, or other factors. |
| Activity 2. | Conduct impact studies on how the adoption of technologies has impacted women in Asian fish value chains. |

Partner Agencies

FAO, regional, national fisheries and statistical services, academia, GAFS, national and regional women in fisheries professional organizations

Article C2. Collective Action, Fishers' and Workers' Organizations

Description

Collective action and empowered fisherfolk and workers' organizations are fundamental to allow all workers, including migrant workers, to operate under decent and gainful conditions while eliminating forced labor, violence, and debt bondage. Fishing communities, especially small-scale producer communities, tend to be the poorest and most marginalized. Likewise, fish workers in processing and other nodes of the fish value chains typically have low-paid, precarious work, especially women. Jobs in the sector are often informal and seasonal with unstable earnings, and this is even more the case for the women. Informal labor is more likely to be conducted outside the frameworks for decent work and the workers excluded from social protection schemes. Formalization of work, i.e., work conducted by women in accordance with labor laws and decent work standards and served by well-functioning collective organizations, is a critical step in achieving the objective of equitable, inclusive, and just work for women in fisheries.

Outcome

Enhanced participation and leadership of women in fishers' organizations and collective action in the seafood sector as a pathway to decent work and access to social protection.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Functioning fisherfolk and particularly women's collectives through recognition of all fishing activities and formalization of activities

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| Activity 1. | Promote sensitization and training within fishing communities to improve understanding of benefit of fisherfolk organizations. |
| Activity 2. | Lobby and train, by relevant state bodies, to support formalization of activities, ensuring the full spectrum of activities are correctly recognized as fishing and supporting development of collectives. |

Activity 3. Conduct social media campaigns featuring inspiring stories of women in fisheries and highlighting not only the challenges but also the opportunities for women in the sector.

Outcome 2. Strengthened representation of women’s collectives and organizations in state consultations

Activity 1. Work with states to ensure consultations include and place equal weight on women’s collectives and organization.

Activity 2. Strengthen fishers and fish workers’ unions and organizations, especially including women’s groups and representation, in SDG#14, Life Under Water, actions.

Outcome 3. Empowered women raising their voices and assuming leadership roles within fisherfolk and women’s organizations

Activity 1. Organize training, mentoring programs, and peer-to-peer training and knowledge exchanges to support women in assuming these roles within women-focused organizations as well as broader sector-wide bodies.

Activity 2. Foster more women-focused networks where women in the sector can exchange experiences and influence practices, and inspire younger generations.

Outcome 4. Barriers to accessing social protection schemes for fisherfolk organization and women’s collectives are reduced

Activity 1. Ensure inclusive definitions of ‘fishing’ are applied by states, particularly to include activities typically conducted by women.

Activity 2. Lobby states to reduce fees for access to social protection and insurance to affordable levels for small-scale producers.

Activity 3. Existing government social protection schemes recognize small-scale fisheries fisherwomen and gleaners as eligible for membership.

Outcome 5. Effective partnerships between fisherfolk organizations/women’s collectives and states are established

Activity 1. Conduct training on workplace safety, safety at sea, and tenets of decent work for fisherfolk organizations.

Activity 2. Encourage and support states to enact laws and regulations for safety at sea, including land-based workplaces for the processing sector.

Activity 3. Encourage states to recognize the status of all fisherfolk to access social protection, credit, and insurance schemes.

Activity 4. Host workshops for the implementation of the VG-SSF Guidelines (particularly Chapter 6) for all stakeholders, including women’s collectives and states.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, fishers’ welfare organizations; workers’ unions and small-scale fisheries unions; ILO; FAO, CTI-CFF Women Leaders’ Forum, GAFS, other Asia-Pacific women in fisheries organizations at the national level

Article C3. Labor Disruptions by Human and Natural Disasters

Description

From time to time, disasters have devastated fisheries and aquaculture communities and their operations, but more recently the frequency of natural and human-induced events has increased. The most common disasters include extreme weather events such as tropical revolving storms (hurricanes, typhoons, and cyclones); abnormal dry, hot, and cold weather; floods and droughts;

petrochemical, plastics, and other pollution events; volcanic explosions and earthquakes; human and other disease outbreaks; major policy changes; and political instability and wars. The COVID-19 pandemic that began in early 2020 and is ongoing was one of the most widespread and disruptive events of the past century. During and following disasters, existing gender norms tend to exacerbate the historical lower engagement of women in critical institutions responding to the disasters. The situation of women in the labor force is compounded by weak data on what women have been doing, and a lack of knowledge on how important women’s labor is in the economy. When gender is addressed, the rationale often is women’s vulnerability, but this downplays women’s agency, and tends to keep women from participating in consultations. Typically, in times of stress from disasters, women are expected to take on an even larger than normal share of the additional duties of care at home and in the community, further undermining their ability to resume work. Most cash assistance and paid disaster relief work goes to men, further weakening women’s financial capacity to help recovery. Research shows that recovery is improved with diversified livelihoods, gender-responsive budgeting, and gender indicators to monitor progress. Staff in mainstream and relief agencies must be educated in gender-based needs of disaster rehabilitation and recovery.⁹

Outcome

During disaster planning, recovery, and rehabilitation, women’s labor and roles in the economy are recognized and taken fully into account by disaster and emergency relief agencies, and fisheries agencies, and women and women’s interests and needs, are represented in decision-making, recovery budgeting and programming, and monitoring progress.

Interim Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1. Women’s economic and care interests are fully integrated into planning and recovery efforts	
Activity 1.	Disaster planning fully includes women’s interests in fisheries and aquaculture, ensuring that women and women’s labor interests are represented formally on planning and consultative committees.
Activity 2.	The plans should ensure processes of consultation from the start of the emergency and should be field tested in emergency drills.
Outcome 2. Women’s economic rights and opportunities secured through the emergency and rehabilitation by gender-responsive budgeting	
Activity 1.	In anticipation of need, develop gender-responsive budgeting guidelines and procedures.
Activity 2.	In the event of an emergency, activate and implement the gender budget provisions.
Outcome 3. Strengthened opportunities for diversified livelihoods for women before, during, and after emergencies	
Activity 1.	In pre-planning, canvass and develop plans that address the possibilities and skills for diversifying women’s livelihoods.
Activity 2.	In the event of an emergency, lead agencies should call on the assistance of groups (private and public sector) that can help provide alternative short and longer term livelihood assistance to women whose labor was displaced or destroyed by the emergency.
Activity 3.	In the event of paid rehabilitation work, ensure that women as well as men have access to the paid work.

⁹ Williams M.J., Lentisco, A., Badayos-Jover, M.B., Pedroza-Gutiérrez, C., Giri, K., Siar, S., Gopal, N., Shanthi, B., Ferrer, A.J.G., Bañez Sumagaysay, M., & Sharma, A. (2019). Gender as the missing link for improving climate change adaptation in fisheries and aquaculture. P. 189-202 in: Johnson, J., De Young, C., Bahri, T., Soto D., & Virapat, C., eds. *Proceedings of FishAdapt: the Global Conference on Climate Change Adaptation for Fisheries and Aquaculture*, Bangkok, August 8–10, 2016. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Proceedings No. 61. Rome: United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, pp 189-202.

Outcome 4. Strengthened support for household and community care to ensure that greater than normal burdens do not fall to the women and further impede their financial recovery

Activity 1. Community support during the emergency and rehabilitation period takes steps for sharing care work to enable women to pursue economic activities.

Outcome 5. In emergency preparedness through to recovery and rehabilitation, necessary partnerships are strengthened, across government (civilian and military) agencies, civil society, sectoral groups, and private firms, explicitly including women's representation

Activity 1. Government fisheries agencies take the lead in linking up with partners.

Outcome 6. Staff understanding of gendered needs, roles, relationships, power, and agency in emergencies improved

Activity 1. Build the knowledge base on the gendered impacts of labor disruptions by human and natural disasters through increased numbers of research studies on actual disasters.

Activity 2. Fisheries agencies commission social scientists who have studied actual emergency situations of national and local relevance to prepare guidance manuals and staff training programs.

Activity 3. All relevant agencies require staff to attend the training.

Activity 4. The relevant agencies monitor progress with the gender elements of the emergency recovery and rehabilitation plans.

Linked SDGs



Partner Agencies

Fisheries agencies; national disaster relief agencies including military, paramilitary, and citizen's groups; central government financial agencies; international relief agencies; community groups and non-government relief agencies; private sector; researchers and research agencies providing technical and social guidance on solutions

NEXT STEPS

The Cooperative Action Plan was initially developed by an expert writing team (**Annex B.1**) that then consulted the interested participants (**Annex B.2**) of the November 29, 2021, webinar on gender and labor in fisheries, “*Women Work in Fisheries, Too!*” and networks maintained by the webinar’s organizing parties (USAID SUFIA LCD, Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF), GAFS/Asian Fisheries Society, and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT). The Plan thus represents expert opinion on the most appropriate short-to-medium term steps that a wide range of agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders can take.

The Plan will be disseminated to promote these actions to various stakeholders, their members, networks, and partners and in the press and social media. Although the Plan does not represent the official policies of the webinar partners’ organizations, webinar partners’ networks are encouraged to consider, develop, and adopt recommended activities of this Action Plan or integrate relevant recommendations into their own work plans.

Call to Action

Please go to this link, <https://forms.office.com/r/nQZSkQb4vc> (or scan the QR code below), for a short survey regarding your or your organization’s interest in taking up some of the activities recommended in this Cooperative Action Plan. Thank you.



FURTHER READING

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ANNEX A. INTERNATIONAL LABOR LAWS AND VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES COVERING WOMEN, GENDER EQUALITY, AND FISHERIES.

Exhibit A-I. Labor Laws and Voluntary Guidelines

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	PURPOSE	PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS
International Labor and Work-Related Laws—not specific to fisheries		
<u>1951 International Labour Organization (ILO) Equal Remuneration Convention (C100)</u>	Equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value	Member governments, employers, workers' organizations
<u>1958 ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (C111)</u>	All human beings, irrespective of race, creed, or gender, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity	Member governments, employers, workers' organizations
<u>1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)</u>	Maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields (requires) measures for the elimination of discrimination in all its forms and manifestations	State parties as the entities responsible for taking appropriate measures at national and international level
<u>1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families</u>	States undertake to respect and to ensure all migrant workers and members of their families within their territory or subject to their jurisdiction the rights provided for in the present Convention without distinction of any kind	Member governments, authorized (documented) migrant workers, and members of their families within the signatory states
<u>2019 ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (C190)</u>	Preventing and eliminating violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment in all places of work	Member states in consultation with employers' and workers' representative organizations; for all workplaces
International Labor and Work-Related Laws—specific to fisheries		
<u>1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF)</u>	Principles and international standards of behavior for responsible practices with a view to ensuring the effective conservation, management, and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity	Global, states and non-state actors; women/gender equality not mentioned; work on board fishing vessels mentioned
<u>2007 ILO Work in Fishing Convention (C188)</u>	Promote decent conditions of work; protect and promote the rights of fishers, primarily on vessels of 24 m and over in length; one minor reference to women in regard to privacy in sleeping accommodation	All fishers and all fishing vessels in commercial fishing operations; states may extend and define the coverage of C188 to other fisheries, in consultation with employers and workers' organizations
<u>2012 IMO Cape Town Agreement International Regulations for the Safety of Fishing Vessels</u>	Regulations for the construction and equipment of fishing vessels	State administrations and vessel owners, builders, and operators

Exhibit A-I. Labor Laws and Voluntary Guidelines

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	PURPOSE	PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS
International Voluntary Guidelines—not specific to fisheries		
<u>2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</u>	Indigenous peoples have the right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law	Indigenous people, with references to historical and contemporary treatments and legal entitlements in states; little focus on women
<u>2011 Women’s Empowerment Principles (UN Women)</u>	Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors to build stronger economies, achieve internationally agreed-upon goals for development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for women, men, families, and communities	States, private businesses, international development institutions
<u>2011 UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights</u>	State’s responsibilities to ensure human rights principles are respected, including in the private sector	States, private businesses; little focus on women and gender
<u>2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN)</u>	The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions economic, social, and environmental—in a balanced and integrated manner	States, governments at all levels, private sector, non-government organizations, communities; noting SDG#5 (gender equality), SDG#8 (decent work), and SDG#14 (life below water)
International Voluntary Guidelines—specific to fisheries		
<u>2014 Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (VG-SSF) (FAO)</u>	Support the visibility, recognition, and enhancement of small-scale fisheries and contribute to global and national efforts toward the eradication of hunger and poverty; support responsible fisheries and sustainable social and economic development, with an emphasis on small-scale fishers and fish workers; gender equality and equity is a guiding principle	FAO member states, non-members; subregional, regional, international and intergovernmental organizations; small-scale fisheries actors; research and academic institutions; private sector, NGOs and others concerned with the fisheries sector and use of the aquatic environment
Regional Voluntary Instruments—specific to fisheries		
<u>2019 SEAFDEC Gender Strategy</u>	Mainstream and integrate gender perspectives into the Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) organization, and in its programs, projects, and activities, to ensure that men, women, and youth at all levels, access equitable benefits in the sustainable development and management of fisheries and aquaculture	SEAFDEC’s own work, and its interactions with member countries and other organizations
<u>2021 Pacific Community Gender Equality and Inclusion Handbook</u>	Guide to assist fisheries practitioners and managers to integrate gender and social inclusion into their daily work cycles; gender integration; links to overarching international and regional commitments	National fisheries practitioners in policy, coastal fisheries management, and livelihoods
<u>2022 Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy</u>	A policy to ensure CTI-CFF will be an inclusive regional platform for achieving its marine conservation and resource management goals. The GESI policy will be integrated into any interventions or programs being implemented by the CTI-CFF.	CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat, member countries, working groups and partner organizations

ANNEX B. ACTION PLAN WRITING TEAM

Exhibit B-1. Women and Fisheries Labor Expert Writing Team

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ANNEX C. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Collective action

This occurs when a group of people agree to work together to achieve a common goal or objective.

Debt bondage

A situation wherein a person is forced to work to pay off a debt. Frequently, workers are deceived into working for little or no pay.

Gender budgeting

Planning budgets within formal budget allocations such as national budgets or ministry budgets with the objective of promoting gender equality to address inequalities imbedded in policies, projects, and allocation of resources, among other things.

Gender norms

Beliefs, practices, rules, and expectations on how women, men, girls, and boys should act and behave in society and within a certain culture. This often leads to gender stereotyping. Deviation from socially accepted gender norms could create conflict in power relations within institutions and society.

Gendered power relations

Ways in which gender shapes the distributions of power in all social situations including households, communities, and broader social organizations such as workplaces, agencies, and markets.

Productive work

An effort that results in goods or services that have monetary value or the equivalent of it. This could be done by the employed, self-employed, or even unemployed (informal sector, subsistence). This could also be paid, partly paid, underpaid, or even unpaid.

Reproductive work

Any work that people have to do for themselves, associated with responsibilities of family and self-care, and household tasks, including community management/social activities. This includes birthing and raising children, household duties, caring for the elderly, community care, environmental care such as mangrove replanting and nurturing, and coastal clean-ups. These are mainly unpaid.

Women's agency

The ability of women to identify goals, or make choices and decisions, and then act upon them.

Youth

The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, with the understanding that member states and other entities use different definitions, for example, USAID youth programs would usually involve a broader age range between 10 and 29 years.¹⁰

¹⁰ <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf>