

Women's Worlds – 2011

Why the coast matters to women: gender, fisheries...



**The gender agenda
for sustaining fishing
communities (ICSF,
2010) and suggestions
to improve the
feminist research in
W & F**



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International Collective in Support of Fishworkers- ICSF



- **The ICSF is an international NGO that works towards the establishment of equitable, gender-just, self-reliant, and sustainable fisheries, particularly in the small scale, artisanal sector.**
- **It was created in 1986.**

International Collective in Support of Fishworkers- ICSF (1986-2011)



- **ICSF mission is:**
to support fishing communities and fishworker's organizations, and empower them to participate in fisheries from a perspective of decent work, equity, gender-justice, self-reliance and sustainability.
- **ICSF's offices are located in India and Belgium.**
- **Website: www.icsf.net**



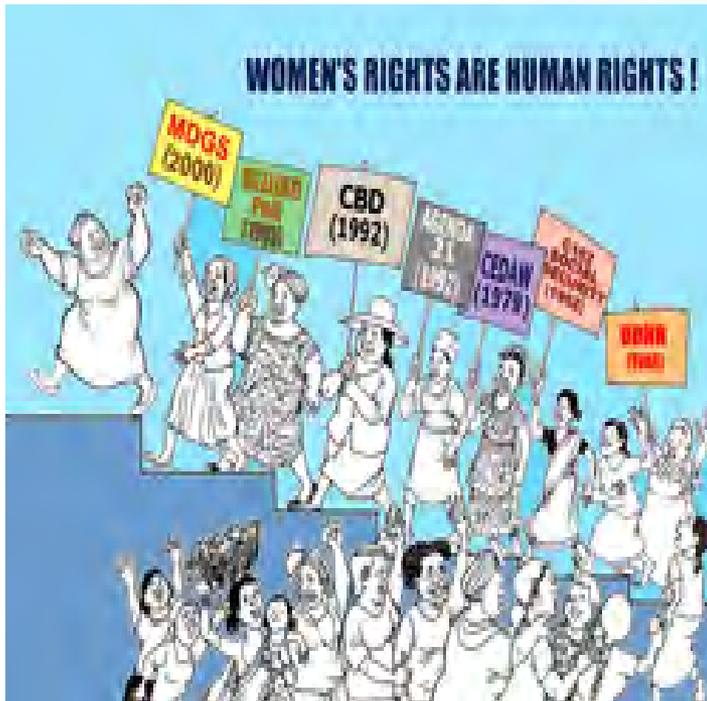
ICSF's Programme on Women in Fisheries



- Since 1986, the ICSF highlighted the fact that the resilience of the artisanal fishery depends on the role that women play in the fishery and the community and develops a special programme to support and strengthen them in different aspects.



ICSF's Programme on Women in Fisheries



Specific findings from grass root experiences:

- Need to valorize women's paid and unpaid labour in sustaining fisheries;
- Need to challenge patriarchal gender relations within and outside the household and within fishworker organizations;
- Need to uphold women's right to participate in fisheries decision-making; and
- Need to challenge non-fisheries developments that exploit and destroy natural resources and displace communities.

Workshop “Recasting the net”

July/2010



ICSF organized the international workshop “Recasting the Net: Defining a Gender Agenda for Sustaining Life and Livelihoods in Fishing Communities”. Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India, 7-10 July 2010;

- **39 participants from 18 countries, including women fishworkers, representatives of fishworker organizations and NGOs, activists and researchers;**
- **Preparatory workshops (of fisherwomen) in India, Thailand, the Philippines, South Africa, Brazil, Europe and Canada in order to inform about their situations and the strategies being adopted by them to assert their rights and defend their interests;**
- **Experiences also from Guinea Conakry, Chile and Tanzania.**

Workshop “Recasting the net”

July/2010. The process



- 1. Presentation of the regional and national reports and experiences related by fisherwomen;**
- 2. Presentation, based on a review of literature, analyzed the main shifts that have taken place over the last three decades in the dominant discourse on women in the small-scale fisheries;**
- 3. Presentation and discussion of international legal instruments of relevance to women in fisheries, with focus on CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (UN).**

Workshop “Recasting the net”

July/2010. The process



- 3. Presentation on the Programme on Fisheries and Aquaculture for Poverty Alleviation and Food Security of the FAO/UN and the proposal for an international instrument on small-scale fisheries;**
- 4. Afterwards, participants worked in groups...**
 - to consolidate their “dreams” about fisheries that would sustain life and livelihoods in fishing communities, and**
 - to define an agenda for action to realize these dreams; and**
- 5. Were defined 17 dreams and a shared agenda detailed below.**





Our dreams (1)

We dream of a future in which:

- **aquatic ecosystems retain their ability to regenerate living resources, sustain livelihoods and meet food security;**
- **fishing communities, including women and children, are able to live their lives in peace and dignity, free of violence, and to enjoy decent living and working conditions;**



Our dreams (2)

We dream of a future in which:

- **the rights of fishing communities to their coastal lands and inland fisheries resources, are recognized;**
- **women have central roles in decision making process of fishing communities organizations, including producer organizations;**



Our dreams (3)

We dream of a future in which:

- **women engaged in fisheries activities have the first right to access the fish that is landed, and the marketing chain is restructured in equitable ways to privilege and valorise small-scale and artisanal fisheries and fishworkers; and**
- **power to manage coastal and fishery resources is devolved to local and indigenous communities, and their capacity to do so is strengthened.**



Shared Agenda for Action

Based on these dreams, ICSF proposed an action agenda for different sections of society:

- **Households and communities;**
- **Fishworker's organizations;**
- **Civil society organizations (including NGOs, media, consumers and environmental organizations);**
- **The State;**
- **International organizations; and**
- **Research organizations.**



Shared Agenda:

Households and communities



- **Strengthen the capacity of women to participate in fishworker movements and organizations;**
- **Challenge men's resistance to women's participation in organizations, where it exists, and ensure the sharing of household work;**
- **Secure an environment of safety and freedom from violence and sexual abuse within the household and community.**

Shared Agenda: Fishworker organizations



- **Develop a culture in which all forms of discrimination are eliminated;**
- **Guarantee space and support for women to participate in decision-making processes, including those related to conservation and fisheries management;**
- **Create separate spaces for women to organize autonomously at local, regional, national and international levels.**

Shared Agenda: Civil society organizations



- **Promote awareness of the socioeconomic conditions and basic needs of fishing communities, especially of women and other marginalized groups;**
- **Respect and value traditional and local knowledge, and support efforts of fishing communities towards sustainable and equitable fisheries.**

Shared Agenda: The State (1)



- **Guarantee access and control over resources by small-scale and artisanal fishers and their communities, with particular attention to women;**
- **Recognize and protect collective rights to the resources on which fishing communities, including indigenous communities, have traditionally depended on for their food security and livelihood;**
- **Guarantee universal health and social security and the socialization of housework, and protect existing systems of social security that have proven to be adequate;**
- **Guarantee safety, and assure freedom from violence and sexual abuse.**

Shared Agenda: The State (2)



- **Ratify and fully implement human-rights instruments, in particular CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action;**
- **Support and protect coastal and island communities, with particular attention to women, in relation to natural disasters and pandemics, such as HIV/AIDS;**
- **Recognize workers in the informal sector, in particular, women, and guarantee their labour rights and their rights to decent work;**
- **Generate sex-disaggregated data in all aspects of fisheries, through census operations.**

Shared Agenda:

International organizations



- **Integrate an understanding of gender that shapes fisheries policies at various levels towards sustaining life and livelihoods in fishing communities;**
- **Desist from funding projects that are environmentally destructive and socially unjust, and that impose structural adjustment conditionalities (poverty reduction and growth facilities) on recipient States.**

Shared Agenda: Research organizations



Undertake research and analysis on:

- **The conditions and contributions of women in small-scale and artisanal fisheries and fishing communities; and make the findings widely accessible;**
- **The impact of development and conservation projects on the lives of men, women and children in fishing communities;**
- **The impact of fisheries conservation and management measures on the lives and livelihoods of fishing communities.**



Priorities

- **We resolve to work together to ensure that this agenda is widely disseminated, incorporated and implemented at all levels,**
- **including it in an international instrument on small-scale fisheries that may be considered by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) of the FAO (is being elaborated).**

Final Ceremony

- All participants sang a Ghanaian fishing song while holding a net, symbolizing the solidarity among participants in taking forward their common concerns and the “Shared Agenda” from the workshop.





 Workshop on
Recasting the Net
Defining a Gender Agenda for Sustaining
Life and Livelihoods in Fishing Communities
7-10 July 2010
Chennai, India

Suggestions to improve the feminist research in W&F



What are we trying to achieve?

Since the feminist principles and values and a social critical position, collaborate for the survival of the small-scale fishery communities and the improvement of their conditions of life through the promotion of their women as development agents and social and political activists.

This, into the general aim of the abolition of class, gender and race exploration/domination, also for these women.

Suggestions to improve the feminist research in W&F



Which are the issues that have to be addressed?

- A. Give visibility to the fisherwomen work;
- B. Reinforce their economic role in maintenance of the fishery communities;
- C. Develop their identity and self-reliance (as communities, workers and women);
- D. Reinforce their political role developing their organization and political capacity to defend the collective interests (as communities, fishworkers, and fisherwomen, in particular).

Suggestions to improve the feminist research in W&F



HOW CAN THE FEMINIST RESEARCH COLLABORATE?

-> Produce specific research

- based in theoretical social and feminist frameworks,
- since an historical perspective;
- making syntheses of cases studies;
- researching not only at local level, but also at regional, national and international levels;
- making comparisons between different realities, and

-> **Make a critical analyse** of the place and situation of fisherwomen into the family, the community and the society relative to the exploration and domination relations (class, race, gender, and others) and their synergies.

Suggestions to improve the feminist research in W&F



Specifically....

->Research the role of the women small scale fishery communities, seeing:

- the different kind of works paid and unpaid made by women inside and outside the fishery sector and how much represents in the total family income;
- the process of their collective organization and mobilization and the relation with other social movements;

->Study critically the economic and social politics of the government related to W&F.

Suggestions to improve the feminist research in W&F



- > Incorporate the sex distinguished data in the regular generation of A&F statistics and population census;
- > Produce national and international reports, regularly; and
- > Organize all kind of divulgation and discussion at different levels: government, academy, communities, fishworkers and fisherwomen organizations, but also the general public (media), labor organizations, women organizations, etc.

Thanks



- > To Dr. Marilyn Porter, that invited me to participate in this congress and in this session about Women & Fisheries;**
- > To Women's Worlds- 2011 organizers, specially to Dr. Lise Martin, for the financial support;**
- > To International Collective in Support of Fishworkers – ICSF, for the confidence to represent it;**
- > To all of you, for your attention.**



Thanks!