

The fishing & seafood processing industry, gender and social development

ENGENDERING SECURITY IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

6th Global Symposium on Gender in Aquaculture & Fisheries (GAF6)
Special Symposium at the 11th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum
Bangkok, Thailand
5 August 2016

Anna Olsen

Technical Specialist with the TRIANGLE II project,
ILO, Bangkok, Thailand



Thailand's fishing & seafood processing industry – where are women & where are men?



International
Labour
Organization

- The sectors are highly **gender segregated**
- Gender acts as the basis for division of labour

Women – working in seafood processing sectors



Men – fishers on board fishing vessels



- High number of children & young workers – particularly migrants – linked to lack of child care & labour shortages → parents bring children to work → children start working
- Difficult for Thai government authorities to regulate, due to high levels of irregularity & large number of players, including many micro & small enterprises; both formal & informal; both domestic- & export-oriented (50% of each)
- Increased precariousness due to poor management, depletion of fishing resources & shortage of up to 50,000 workers → operators use human trafficking networks to crew their vessels - no. of vessels uncertain
- Difficult for Thai government authorities to regulate, due to unique nature of work – it takes place in isolated conditions; labour laws do not always apply

Thailand's fishing & seafood processing jobs suffer from decent work deficits



International
Labour
Organization

- **Extremely poor working conditions** in terms of earnings; social protection; working hours; physical injuries; psychological & sexual abuses etc.
- Both sectors **dominated by migrant workers**, mainly from Myanmar, Lao PDR & Cambodia
- Serious **human & labour rights abuses** committed against **women, men & children**
- **Child labourers & migrant workers most vulnerable** to exploitation & hazards
- Discrimination based on gender – age – migration
- Therefore, an **intersectional analysis** is appropriate, accounting for factors such as gender, age, migratory status, nationality/ethnicity, literacy, etc.



What does a gender analysis look like?

– Beyond occupational segregation



International
Labour
Organization

- Gendered dimensions to abuse against women & men workers
- Pay discrepancies between women & men
- Unequal power-structures within factories, unfavorable for women
- lack of women in leadership, managerial & decision-making positions
- Absence of childcare solutions
- children start working



- Interventions tend to focus on fishers on board boats – thus on men workers
- Less focus on the exploitation & vulnerability of women & child workers
- **Gender & intersectional analyses are therefore essential to design activities & interventions that create decent work in the fishing & seafood sectors**

How does the ILO situate its work?

– The Decent Work Agenda & the Sustainable Development Goals



International labour standards:

- ILO convention (binding): C188 on Work in Fishing
- Accompanying ILO recommendation (guidance): R199

The ILO's Decent Work Agenda:

Looks at job creation, rights at work, social protection & social dialogue

- **Gender, equality & non-discrimination**

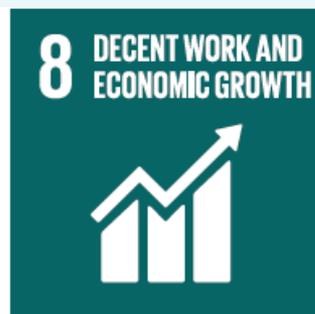
- a cross-cutting policy driver

- **Gender & rights perspectives**

- Human & labour rights – gender a central analytical category

CEDAW – The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

- Provides the legal framework for the protection of women's human rights & the claiming of rights & entitlements of women under international law
- **GR 26** – General Recommendation 26 on Women Migrant Workers (CEDAW – Dec 2008)



ILO & the fishing & seafood industry

- where do we work & what do we do?



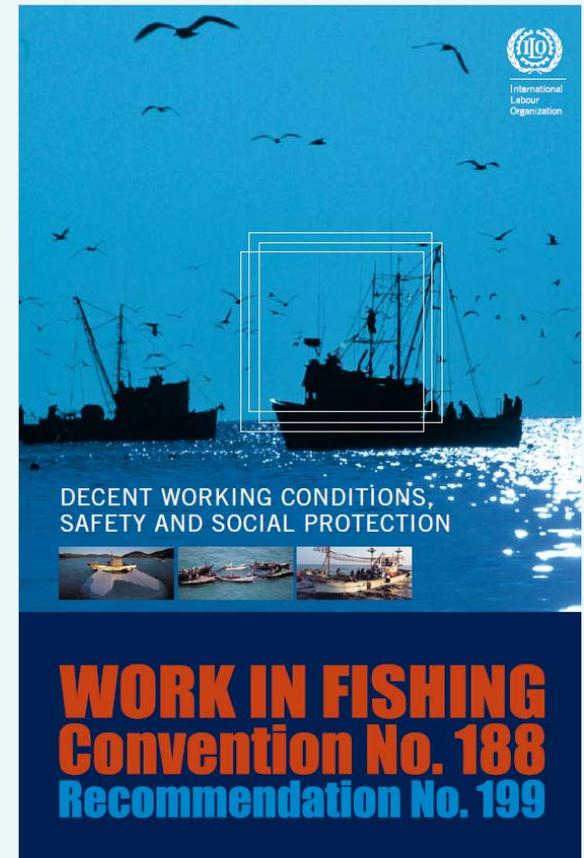
International
Labour
Organization

International labour standards:

- ILO convention (binding): C188 on Work in Fishing
- Accompanying ILO recommendation (guidance): R199

ILO Interventions:

- **The GLP Programme (Good Labour Practices)**
 - Launched in September 2013 by the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW), the Department of Fisheries (DOF) & industry members
 - Guided by multi-stakeholder task force
 - Developed with ILO support
 - Combines establishment of fisheries industry labour guidelines with a supportive good labour practices training programme
 - Special attention to addressing unacceptable forms of work, such as child labour & forced labour
- **The IPEC Project (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour) – Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Shrimp and Seafood Processing Areas in Thailand**
 - Implementation period: 2010-2014
 - USDOL-funded (the United States Department of Labor)
 - Mission: A world free of child labour



What's next?



International
Labour
Organization

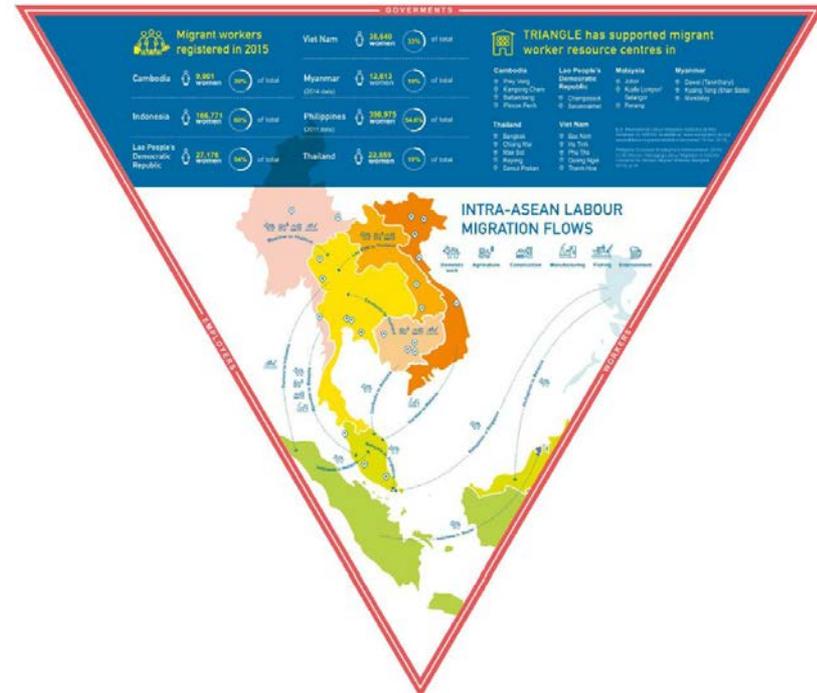
The Combatting Unacceptable Forms of Work in the Thai Fishing and Seafood Industry Project

- 1 Feb 2016 - 31 July 2019
- EU-funded
- Four objectives:
 - strengthen the legal, policy & regulatory framework
 - enhance the capacity of Government officers
 - improve compliance with fundamental principles & rights at work
 - enhance access to support services to workers & victims of labour abuses
- Cross-cutting issues: gender equality, good governance, private sector engagement & environment



TRIANGLE II

- 1 Nov 2015 - 31 Oct 2025
- USDOL-funded
- Aims to ensure that the benefits of labour migration are equally realised by men & women migrant workers, employers & governments
- Shape labour migration opportunities to support inclusive and sustainable growth in the ASEAN Economic Community



Challenges: lack of recognition of the gendered problems

- Donors' & international community's attention drawn to working conditions & abuses on board fishing vessels
- Gender-issues often not prioritized by donors, governments & businesses
- The gendered nature of the problems in the fishing & seafood processing industries is largely unrecognized – because it is complex!
- Most actors don't see the gender challenges – unable to do a gender or intersectional analysis

There is a great need for gender sensitive & responsive approaches to the fishing & seafood industries which include:

- Fill the knowledge gaps in terms of both research, policy and practice
- More evidence & data, disaggregated by sex, age and migratory status
- Gender value chain analysis
- Gender, intersectional & feminist analyses of “low-skilled work” in the different fishing & seafood sectors
- Relate to women's economic empowerment – account for gender gaps in the world of work, including sectoral & occupational segregation, gender wage gap & gaps in the policy framework for work and family integration



How do we move forward?

Creating social justice, work & dignity for all requires a widened focus of interventions, accounting for:

- Particularly vulnerable groups of workers – migrants and child/young workers
- Conditions in factories and other seafood processing sectors – not only on boats
- Living conditions, not only working conditions – what happens after work?
- Life cycle analysis of gender roles – who takes care of the parents/kids?
- develop policies that enhance sustainability of enforcement and compliance

This requires changing mind sets, raised awareness & targeted action by many stakeholders

- There is now a growing interest in the link between the seafood industry, social responsibility and development – where is the focus on gender
- How can we ensure that the SDGs are implemented - no one is left behind – no women left behind
- Gaining momentum – policy drivers for gender transformative change



Thank you

Anna Olsen
Technical Specialist
olsena@ilo.org

6th Global Symposium on Gender in Aquaculture & Fisheries (GAF6)
Special Symposium at the 11th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum



 +662 288 1234

 +622 288 3062

 BANGKOK@ilo.org

 www.ilo.org/asia

 ILO.ORG

 ILOTV

 iloasiapacific

 @ILOAsiaPacific