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AND FOOD SECURITY



# Gender and Labor in Fisheries 101



**Women Work in Fisheries, Too!**  
**November 29, 2021**



Shaping the Future | Gender Justice for Sustainable Aquaculture and Fisheries

- Introduction/Background
- Basic Definitions
- Types of Labor in Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Sources of Labor
- Basic FAO Labor Statistics
- Gender Divisions of Labor
- Labor Agencies and Organizations

Topics

# Introduction/Background

- USAID Sustainable Fish Asia Local Capacity Development Activity
- Rationale for looking at gender and labor particularly women working in fisheries
- Cooperative Action Plan



# Basic Definitions



- **Labor:** the physical, mental, and social effort used to produce goods and services OR those who produce goods and services
- **Fair Labor/Just Work:** activities that promote better working conditions for all people working in all nodes of the fisheries value chain
- **Entrepreneur:** a person who, in producing goods and services, is prepared to lose money in order to make a profit
- **Equitable:** fair and reasonable treatment according to respective needs.
- **Inclusive:** not excluding anyone involved, open to all; giving access to opportunities and resources for the marginalized

# Types of labor in fisheries and aquaculture

- Productive (employed, self-employed, unemployed)
  - Paid
  - Partly paid or underpaid
  - Unpaid
- Reproductive or care
  - sub-types of this work – birthing and raising children, household duties, caring for elderly, community care, environmental care, etc.
  - Mainly unpaid

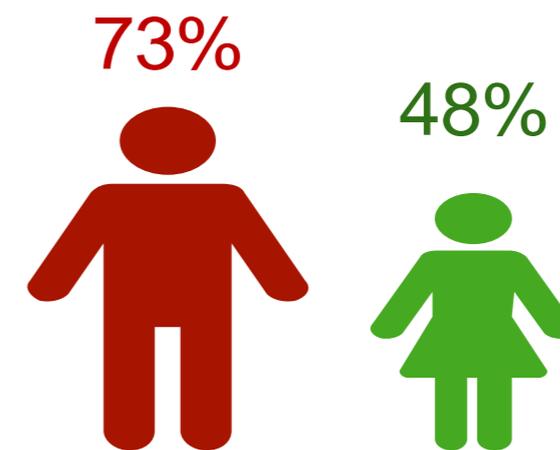


# Sources of labor

- Local hires
- Self-employed
- (Domestic/internal) migrants
- Cross-border migrants
  - Long term legal
  - Itinerant
  - Illegal/irregular



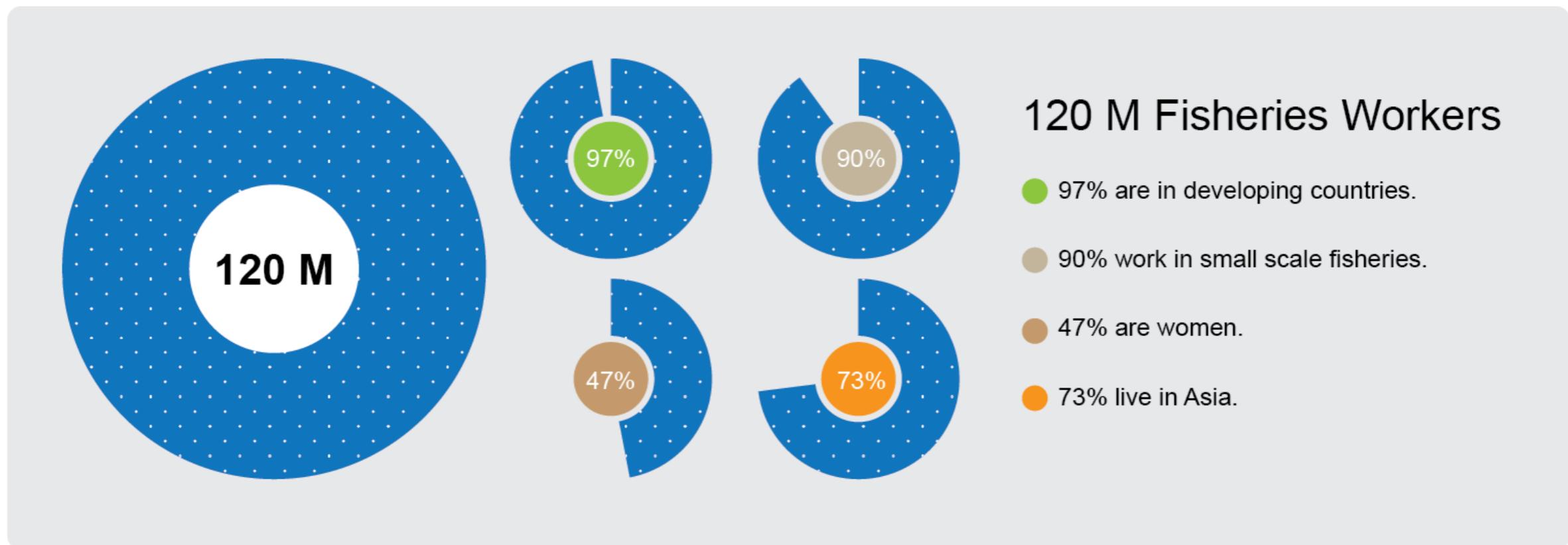
600,000 workers: 302,000 registered migrant workers, Thailand (ILO 2018)



received minimum wage or more,  
n=434, Thailand (ILO 2018)

# Basic FAO statistics on fisheries/ aquaculture labour

- Taken from State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2020, and Illuminating Hidden Harvests 2012



- Poor state of gender-disaggregated data nationally, globally
- Value chain nodes – fishing/farming, pre- and post-harvest work, trading, retailing, services
- Statistics refer only to paid labor

# Basic FAO statistics on fisheries/ aquaculture labour

Latest info from Illuminating Hidden Harvest for SSF 2021

113 M

45 M  
(40%)

- Working in small scale and subsistence fisheries
- Women participate in SSF (paid or unpaid)



- Pre-harvest (gear fabrication/repair, provision of needs)
- Commercial harvest (vessel and non-vessel based)
- Post-harvest (processing, transporting, trading, selling, etc.)
- Subsistence fishing



Photo: Quang Ng. Vinh



Photo: USAID Oceans



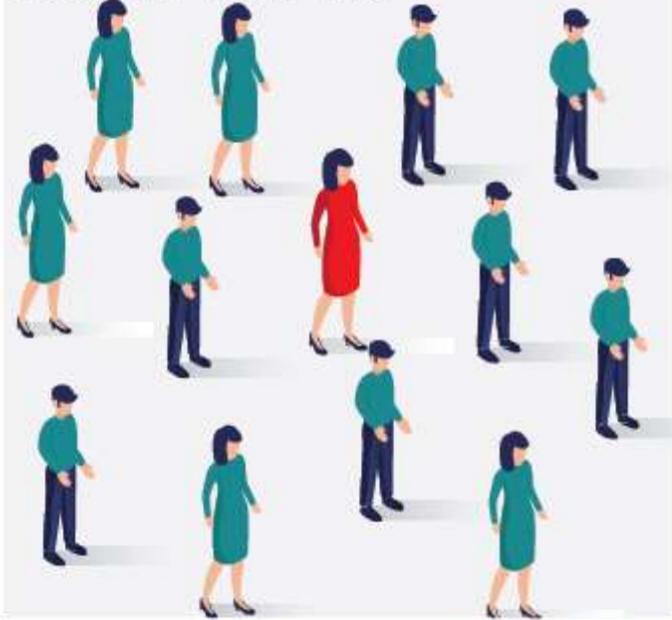
Photo: M.J. Williams



# Gender divisions of labor in fisheries/aquaculture

## Main Causes of Gender Division of Labor (not mutually exclusive)

Social Norms



Labor Cost Structure



Stereotype



Skills/Education Level



Competing Duties



Structural work issues:

- hours of work
- flexibility in arrangements

# Labor Agencies and Organizations

- International – ILO; FAO – to some extent; IMO (seafarers); IOM (migration); OHCHR (Human Rights), UN Committee on Status of Women
- Regional – regional agencies such as EU and USAID
- National – Ministries of labor, social welfare, fisheries, human resources, women and gender, education/training, enforcement, etc
- NGOs, labor and trade unions, workers representatives
- Private Sector – business representative bodies (from small scale workers, e.g., SEWA, to big business groupings, e.g., SEABOS), certification and benchmarking bodies
- All agencies focus solely or mainly on paid labor, and not all are gender sensitive or responsive



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**Thank you!**



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