

# GAF 101: Introduction to Gender Analysis in Fisheries and Aquaculture Research

Pre-Conference Workshop  
September 30, 2025

Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand

**9TH GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON  
GENDER IN AQUACULTURE & FISHERIES**



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# With thanks for collaboration and support



**ICAR - CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF FISHERIES TECHNOLOGY**

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Nature-based Climate Solutions in  
Aquaculture Food Systems in Asia-Pacific  
(AQUADAPT)

# GAF 101 & 201 Workshop Team



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# Objectives



- Deepen understanding of why a gender perspective is important
- Identify key elements of robust gender analysis in aquaculture and fisheries research
- Frameworks and strategies for integrating gender analysis in research and development

*Moving beyond 'describing women's roles'*

- *to addressing gender inequalities in fisheries and aquaculture research*

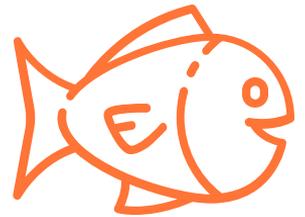
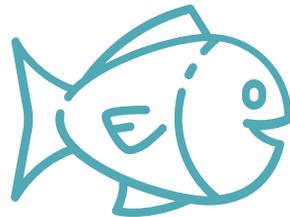


# Agenda

1. Who is here today?
2. Unpacking gender for fisheries and aquaculture research
  - Why study gender
  - When to integrate gender in research
  - What: The basic concepts of gender & intersectionality

## *Break*

- How: Frameworks for intersectional gender analysis
3. Hands-on engagement
  4. Wrapping up: Reflections and resources



1. Who is here  
today?

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## Self-organize into your group



- **Gender “Newbie”**—new to this and keen to learn the basics
- **Gender “Novice”**—know something about GESI integration and want to learn more
- **Gender “Regular”**—already integrating GESI routinely and looking to strengthen
- **Gender “Expert”**—regularly integrate GESI and support others in this, keen for fresh ideas

In your group,  
share:

(5 mins)

- What motivated you to come today?
- What are you hoping to get from this morning?

## 2. Unpacking gender for fisheries and aquaculture research

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## 2.1 Why analyse gender?

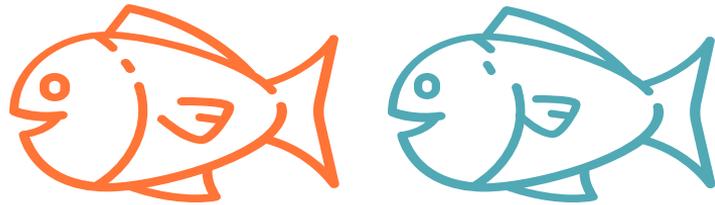
*If we want to understand how fish food systems work, and what could improve them, we need to analyze gender.*

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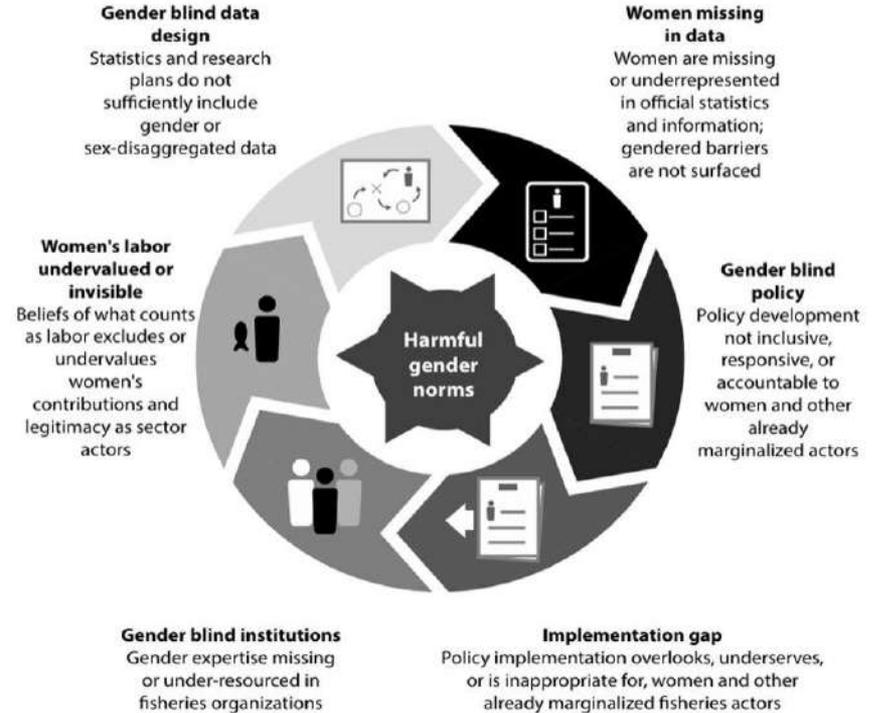


- People experience many aspects of life differently; are often treated differently; and therefore, are affected by social-economic transformations, innovations, and interventions differently.
- ~45% of people engaged in subsistence fisheries are women (Harper et al. 2025); even where women aren't present, gender influences labor relations and the workplace

The lack of gender data and weak or missing gender analysis perpetuates gender-weak policies and programmes and therefore gender inequalities.



## Entrenched gender blindness



Source: McDougall et al. 2021. [Gender integration and intersectionality in food systems research for development: A guidance note | CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform](#) Drawing on Biswas 2018.

Gender-weak science and policy hinder technology uptake and ability to manage natural resources effectively.

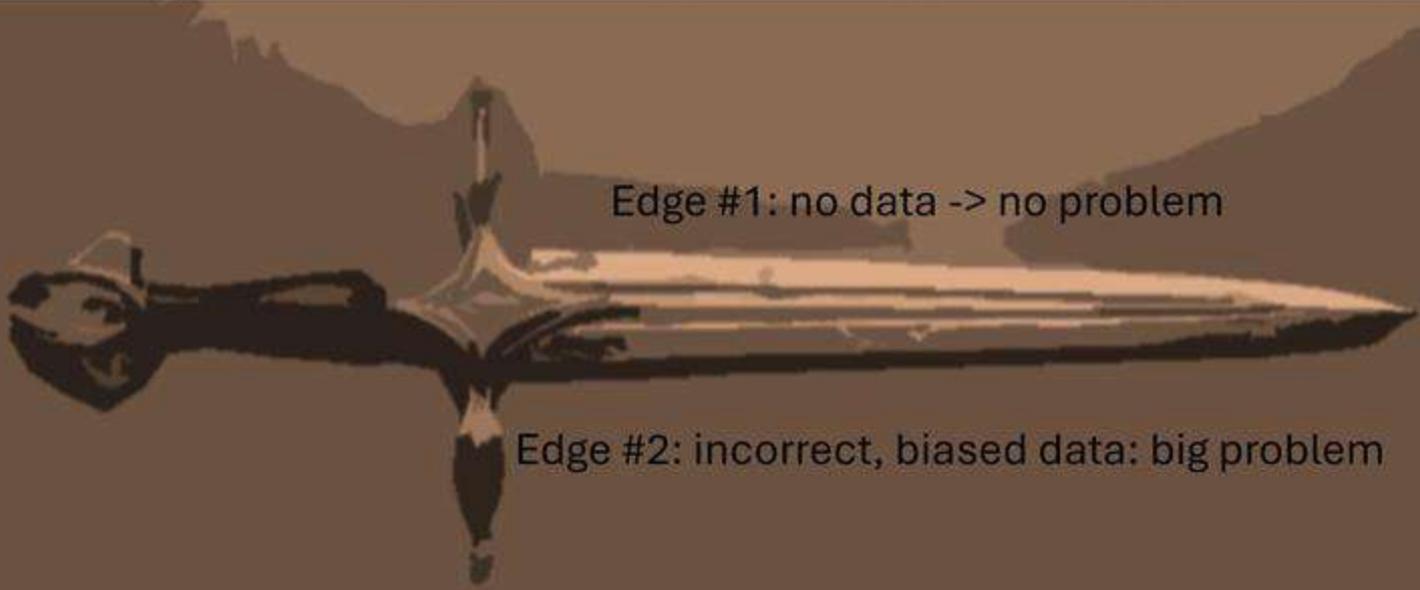


# A journey from data to wisdom and justice



## Data as a two-edged sword (Krieger, 2021)

- Caution that data can be problematic
- Data are political



Edge #1: no data -> no problem

Edge #2: incorrect, biased data: big problem

The point:  
data for  
gender  
justice in  
aquaculture  
& fisheries

# Filling Gender Data and Knowledge Gaps

- Follow-up study (Harper et al., 2025) to 2023 *Illuminating Hidden Harvests report (FAO et al 2023)* asks
  - What gendered data are needed for SSF?
    - economy and environment
    - governance and support services
    - health and nutrition
  - Which databases may contain the data, how they were sourced, which organisations are responsible for the data?
  - Discusses making the policy case, creating an enabling institutional environment - co-generating gender data, evidence
- Sourcing the data and information
  - Multiple data sources may be needed – don't rely only on the fisheries agency
    - Many current and potential data sources are outside fisheries agencies, e.g., government statistical and census offices
  - Qualitative data in the literature, especially reviews (Durano et al., 2025, Philippines policies)
  - Apply academic labour to recover gendered information (Harper et al., 2020; Szymkowiak and Reese, 2020, McClenachan & Moulton 2022)



## 2.2 When to integrate an intersectional gender lens?

Answer:

At the beginning and all the way through



Tip:  
Avoid GESI  
evaporation!



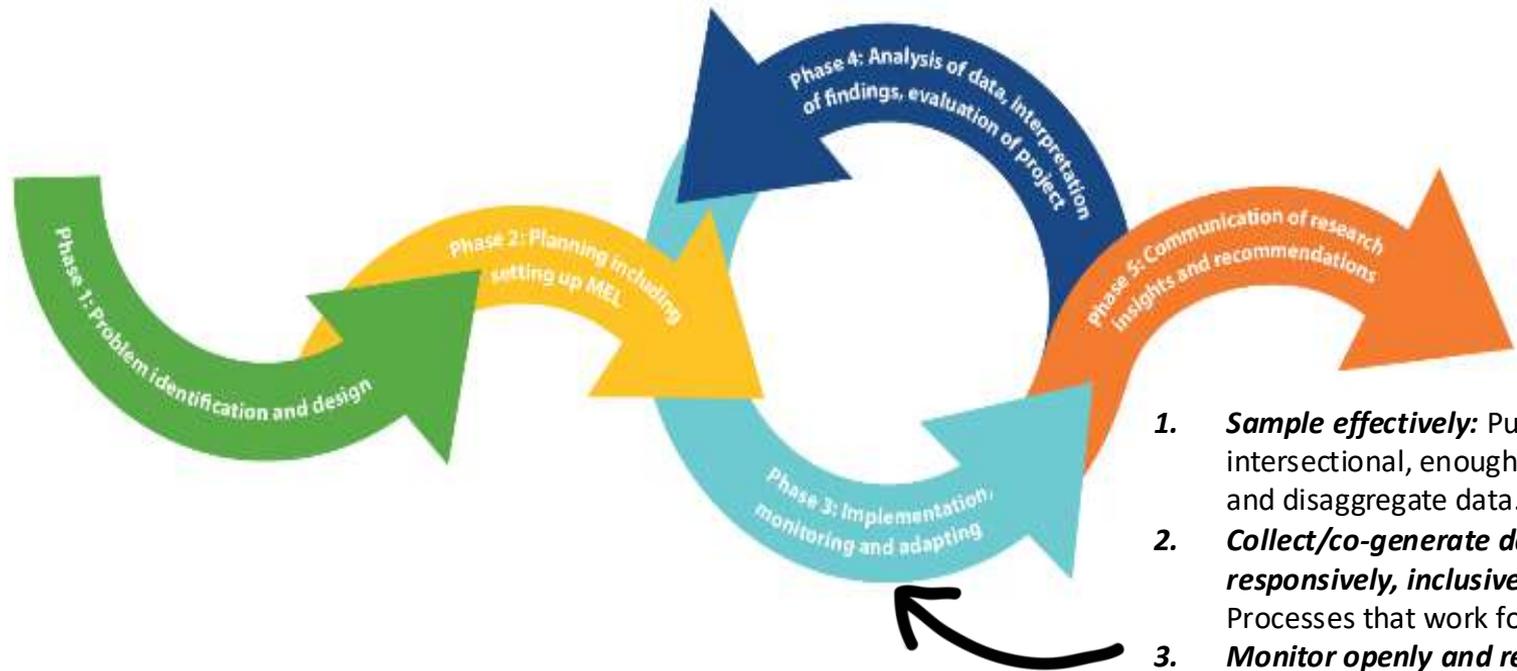
## ➤ Take key actions at *each* stage



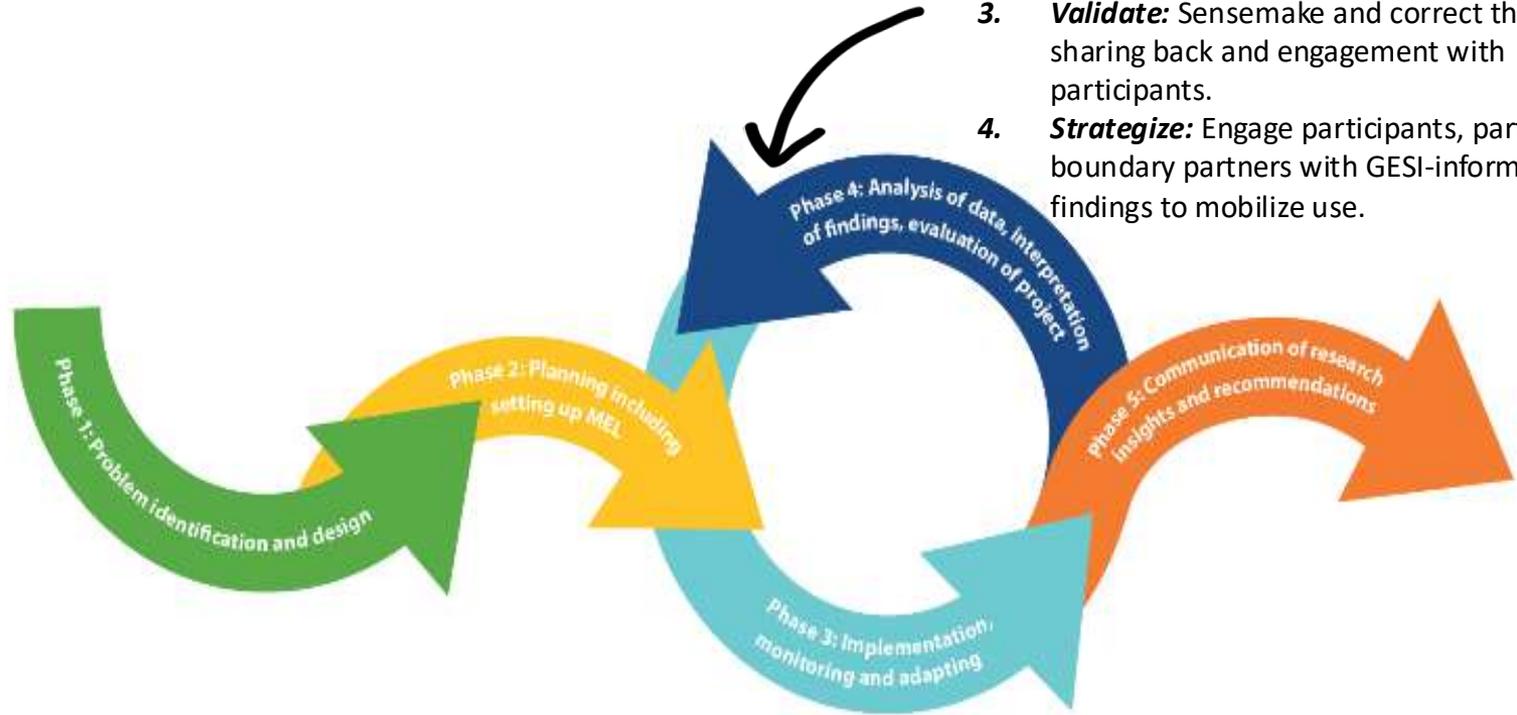
1. **Include and connect:** Gender scientists, equitable partnerships, balance and diversity; boundary partners.
2. **Use:** GESI lens to critically assess the problem from different perspectives, across scales.
3. **Identify:** Feasible GESI-related outcomes--Reach? Benefit? Empower? Transformation? Ethical risks and mitigations.
4. **Inform:** GESI scoping studies to refine problem.

1. **Strategize:** (Co-)Develop a GESI Strategy, indicating risks and integration needs, plans in all parts of the project.
2. **Choose:** Methodological choices that support empowerment.
3. **Leverage MEL:** Use gender-responsive MEL pillars, i.e., indicators, lens, unintended consequences, explanatory.
4. **Resources:** Sufficiently fund GESI expertise & design.
5. **Assess and strengthen:** GESI capacities of team and partners, tailored and including blind spots.

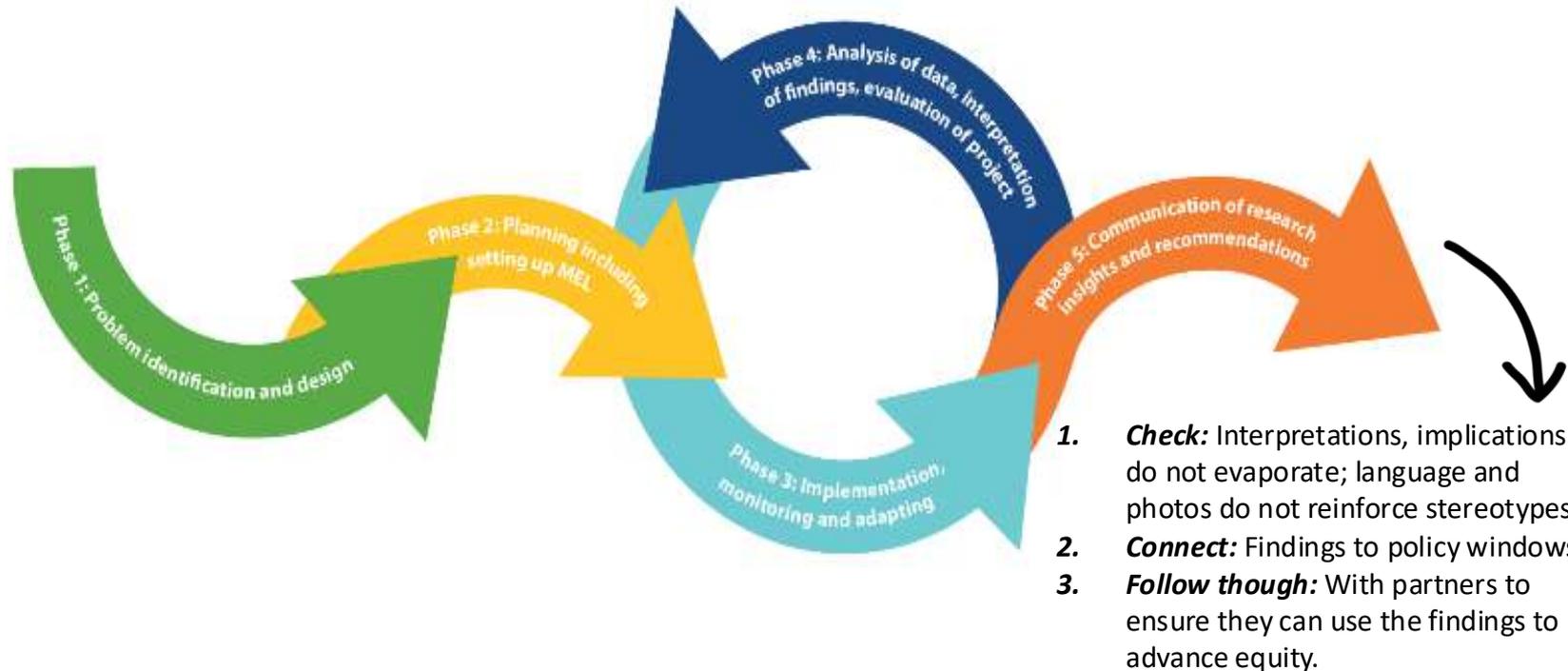




1. **Sample effectively:** Purposive, intersectional, enough power—and disaggregate data.
2. **Collect/co-generate data responsively, inclusively:** Processes that work for all.
3. **Monitor openly and reflexively:** Open-ended, adaptive.



1. **Surface patterns:** using disaggregated data.
2. **Deepen:** GESI analysis using framework, why and so what?
3. **Validate:** Sensemake and correct through sharing back and engagement with participants.
4. **Strategize:** Engage participants, partners, boundary partners with GESI-informed findings to mobilize use.



Source: McDougall et al. 2021. [Gender integration and intersectionality in food systems research for development: A guidance note | CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform](#)



## 2.3 What: Core concepts of gender & intersectionality

**Basics 1.**

What is **gender**?

## Basics 1.

# What is **gender**?

Both:

- An identity
- A core concept in research, analytical lens

What is  
**gender?**

First, as an **identity**:

➤ **Is GENDER the  
same as SEX?**

What is  
**gender?**



← ***Sex is a biological term:*** hormones,  
chromosomes, organs

- Female, intersex, male

What is  
**gender?**



**Gender identity:** How you (in your mind) define your gender

- Woman, gender nonbinary/genderqueer+, man...

**Sex is a biological term:** hormones, chromosomes, organs

- Female, intersex, male

What is  
**gender?**

As an **identity**:

➤ **Is GENDER the  
same as SEX?**

What is  
**gender?**

As an **identity**:

➤ **Is GENDER the  
same as SEX?**

**NO.**

What is  
gender?

Second, as a **core concept and lens in research:**

**Is GENDER the same as  
(referring to, adding or counting)  
WOMEN?**

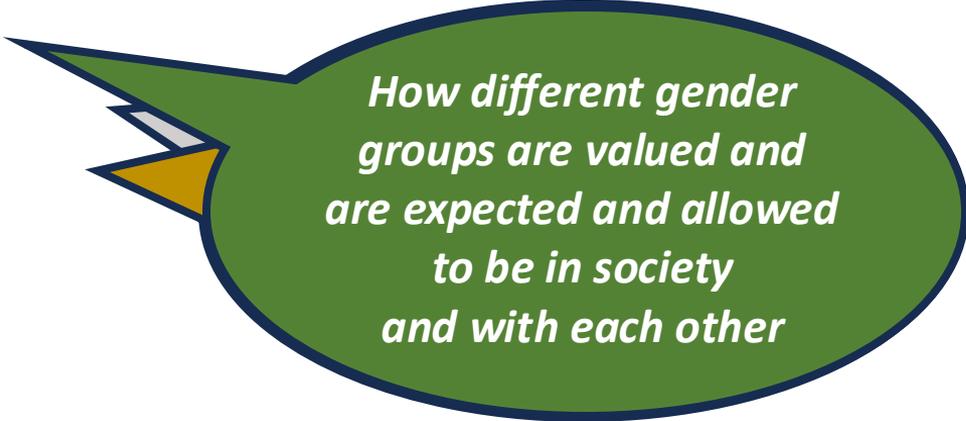
**Let's unpack it...**

## What is gender?

Gender refers to the  
**socially constructed**  
ideas, practices, 'rules'  
relating to gender, masculinity  
and femininity.

It relates to the roles,  
responsibilities, expectations,  
power, and rights associated with  
being  
a 'man' or a 'woman'...

- geographically and historically dependent
- therefore *dynamic*



*How different gender  
groups are valued and  
are expected and allowed  
to be in society  
and with each other*

# What is gender?

These may become  
'normalised',  
thus inequities and effects  
can become invisible.



Sources: MS Stock images; Flickr.

# What is gender?

Gender in research elucidates:

**how and in what ways gender  
power *relations*** at **all scales**,

& formal and informal **structures** (policies,  
norms),

shape barriers, expectations, opportunities,  
exercising of rights, and outcomes for  
individuals and groups

- *In aquaculture & fisheries*, in contexts
- *In research processes and institutions*,  
and thus in influence on policy,  
practices, societies



# What is gender?

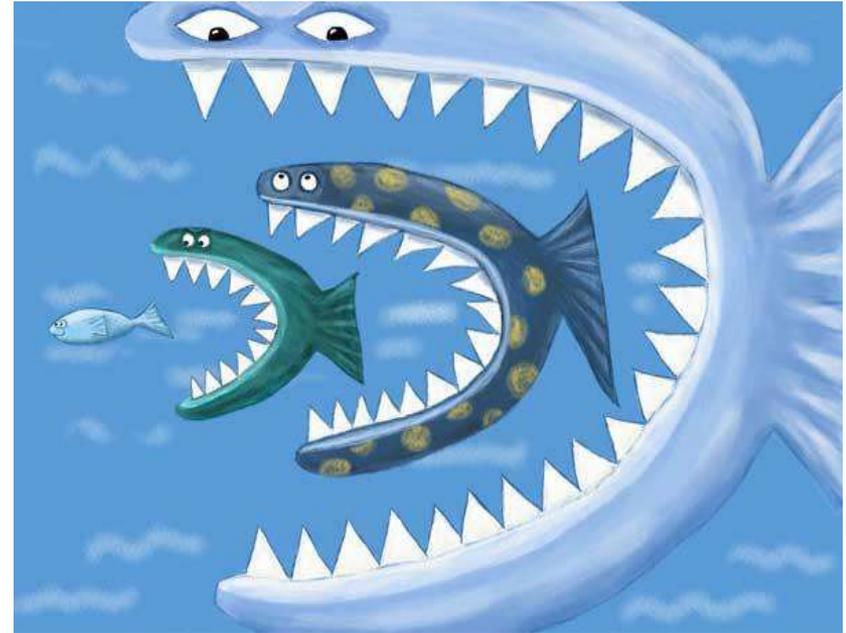
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What is  
gender?

Second, as a **core concept and lens in research:**

**Is GENDER the same as  
(referring to, adding or counting)  
WOMEN?**

**NO.**

## **Basics 2. Intersectionality**

**Do we consider  
only gender?**

**I.e., Should we assume 'all women are homogeneous', all 'men  
are homogeneous' etc?**

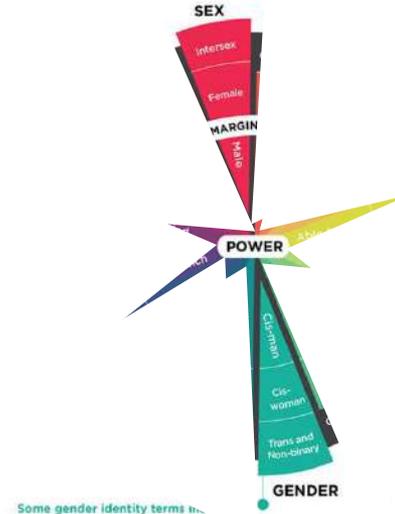
## Gender

*“...continues globally to be a primary axis of inequality”.*

(Criado-Perez 2019)

As such, it always needs to be considered.

**But we need to also recognise other dimensions— and how they interact with gender marginalisations.**



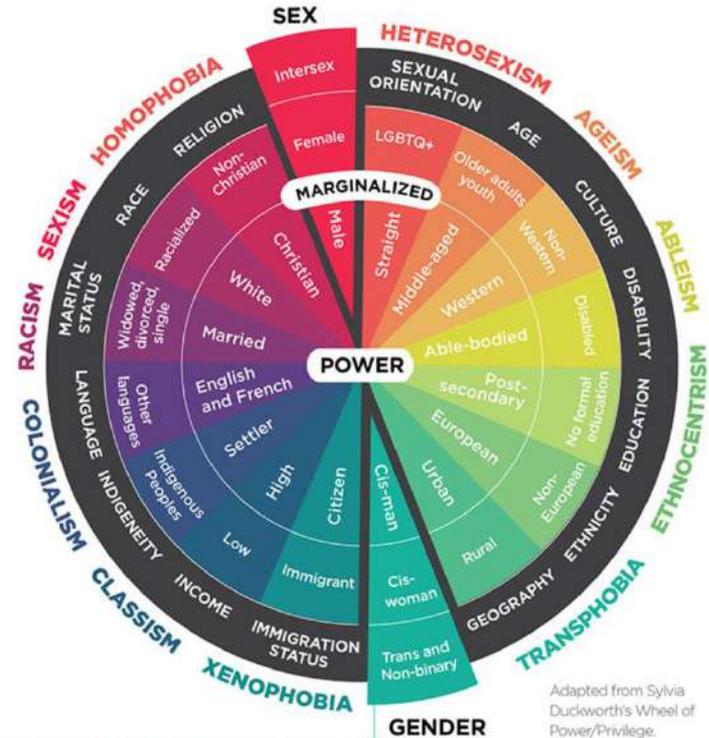
Source: adapted from <https://dhr-irsc.gc.ca/e/52352.html>

**What are other  
social dimensions  
of power or  
marginalisation?**



Source: adapted from <https://cibr-irsc.gc.ca/e/52352.html>

There are many –  
and they interact  
with gender



Adapted from Sylvia Duckworth's Wheel of Power/Privilege.

Some gender identity terms include:

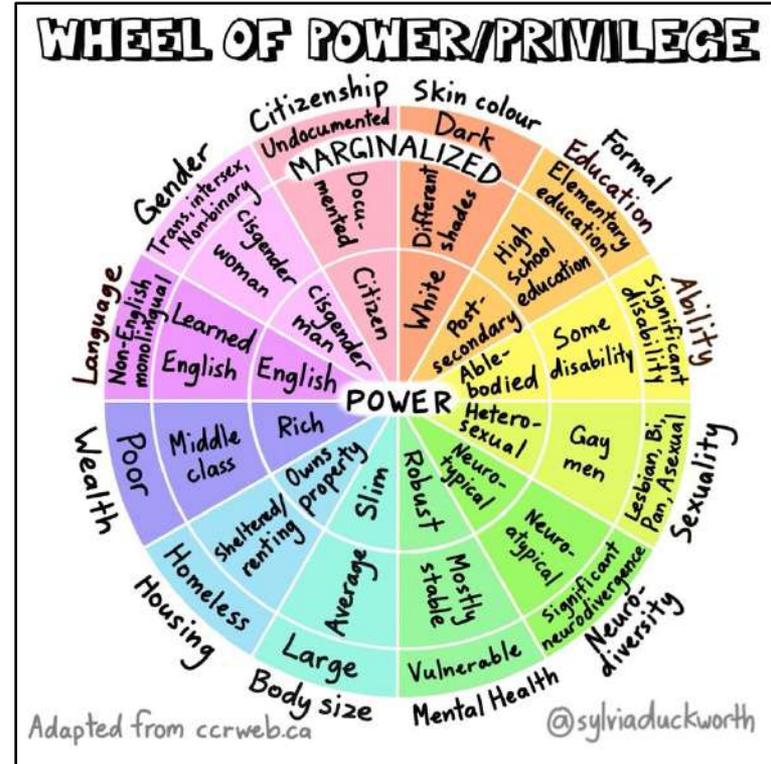
Agender	Genderfluid	Gender neutral	Transgender man
Bigender	Genderqueer	Non-binary	Transgender woman



## An *intersectional gender lens*

considers:

- *multiple* aspects, with gender as a main axis
- *power relations* among
- effects on diverse groups: well-being and on sustainable development
- context-specific realities, while focusing on systematized barriers and structural drivers



Source: Silvia Duckworth CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 (Accessed: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sylviaduckworth/50500299716> Sept 27, 2025)

# Quick Activity A: Intersectionality in context?

## **Step 1. Quiet thinking individually (2 minutes)**

Reflect for on a context where you do fisheries or aquaculture research:

- a) Which (gender x social groups) tends to have the *least power*/are the most discriminated against or marginalised? Why?
- b) Which (gender x social groups) tends to have the *most power*? Why?

# Quick Activity A: Intersectionality in context?

## **Step 1. Quiet thinking individually (2 minutes)**

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- a) Which (gender x social groups) tends to have the *least power*/are the most discriminated against or marginalised? Why?
- b) Which (gender x social groups) tends to have the *most power*? Why?

## **Step 2. Discuss in pairs/trios (4 minutes):**

Briefly share these insights—and identify what different contexts have in common or how they differ in terms of patterns of intersectionality.

- If time, discuss ‘so what’: how do these patterns affect well being? How do they affect intended progress towards local or national F&Aq goals, SDGs?

# Quick Activity B: Who am I?

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➤ ***Who am I? Intersectionality  
Handout.***

Step 1. Quiet thinking, answering individually ( 3 minutes)

Step 2. Quiet thinking, answering questions individually (5 mins)

Step 3. In pairs discussion of Step 3 questions (6 mins)





## 2.4 How: Frameworks for intersectional gender analysis

# Gender Analysis

## What is it?

- A systematic analytical process used to identify, describe and understand the nature, causes and outcomes of gendered differences and power dynamics in a specific context.
- Draws on bodies of theory, frameworks and tools to robustly evidence and explain social, economic, cultural and political realities of women, men, girls and boys, and the ways policies, programs and services differentially impact their lives.

## Purpose?

- A building block for equitable, effective **research** for development, needed for ethical design (avoid reinforcing disparities), effective targeting and responsiveness, increase accuracy and relevance, lead to stronger innovations and contributions.
- Necessary to inform strategies at all scales that promote inclusion, equity and justice across all genders and social groups, as needed for societal wellbeing and for progress towards sustainable development.

# Gender Analysis Frameworks

## Gender Roles Approach



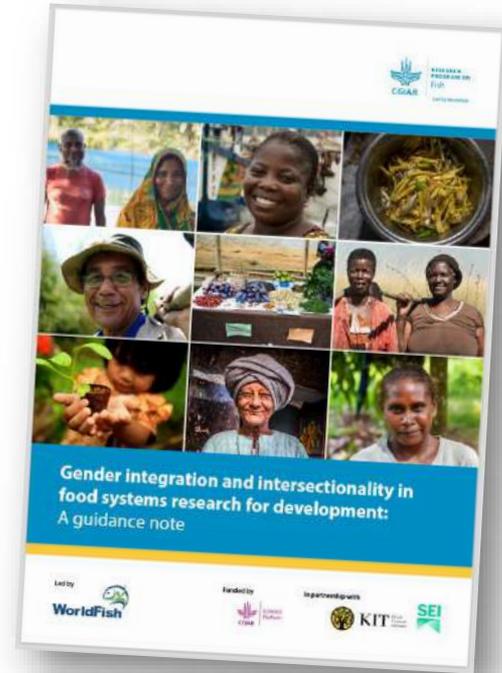
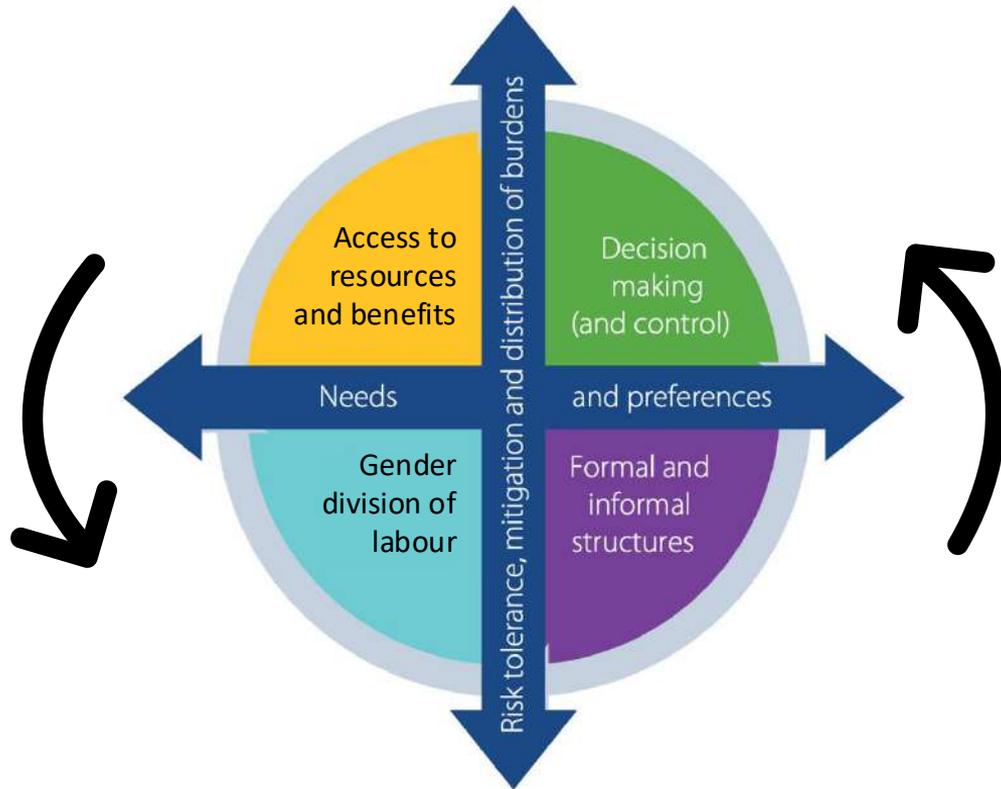
- Focuses on women and men's economic *roles* and their relative access to and control over resources;
- Understands gender as an individual characteristic
- Aims to anticipate the impacts of projects on productive and reproductive roles;
- Takes the household, rather than the breadth of institutions, as the unit of analysis;
- Tends to assume that women are a homogeneous category; and
- Tends to generate descriptive rather than theoretical research.

## Gender Relations Approach

- Focuses on gendered power relations that perpetuate inequalities;
- Uncovers differences between women and men, divided by other aspects of social differentiation such as class, race and ethnicity (Intersectional approach);
- Moves beyond the household to include the community, market, and state institutions (multi-scalar perspective);
- Aims to understand the dynamics of gender relations in different institutional contexts to identify women's bargaining position and formulate strategies to improve this;
- Often produces theoretically rich analyses.

# Relations-based Gender Analysis Framework: Core Building Blocks

(McDougall et al. 2021)



Source: McDougall, et al. 2021.

<https://digitalarchive.worldfishcenter.org/items/b19e5eda-2a5b-4f09-b189-d69789434f81>

## Resources & benefit

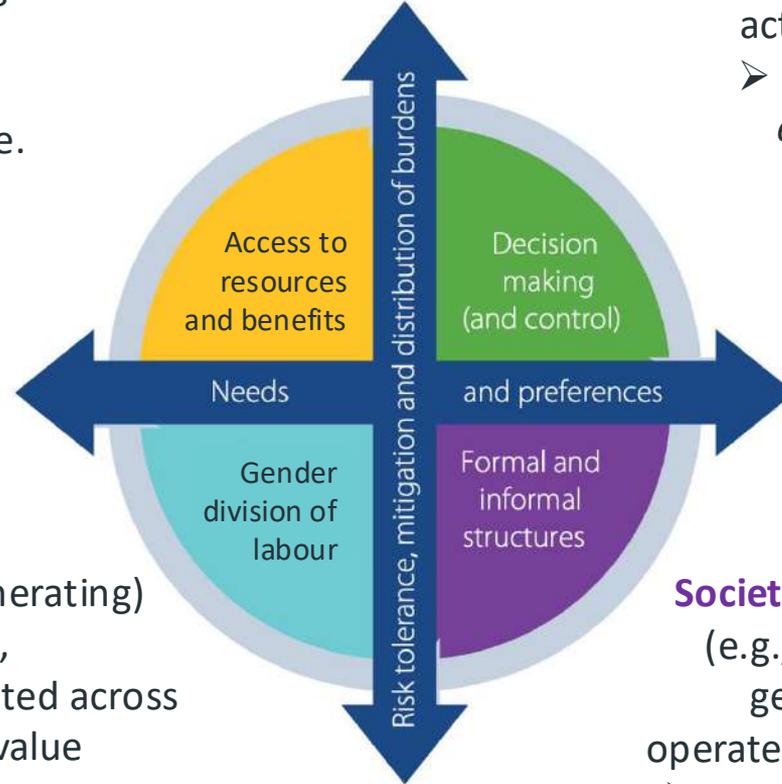
**distribution:** Access is having the opportunity to use a resource; benefits are the outcomes gained from its use.

- *Subsistence and traditional uses may be sidelined...*

## Social allocation of tasks:

How productive (income-generating) and reproductive (caregiving, household) roles are distributed across genders within households, value chains, and institutions.

- *Inequitable returns, time burdens (women), safety risks at sea (men)...*



Source: McDougall et al., 2021.

**Power to act and influence:** Ability to voice priorities, shape decisions, & act on them meaningfully at scales.

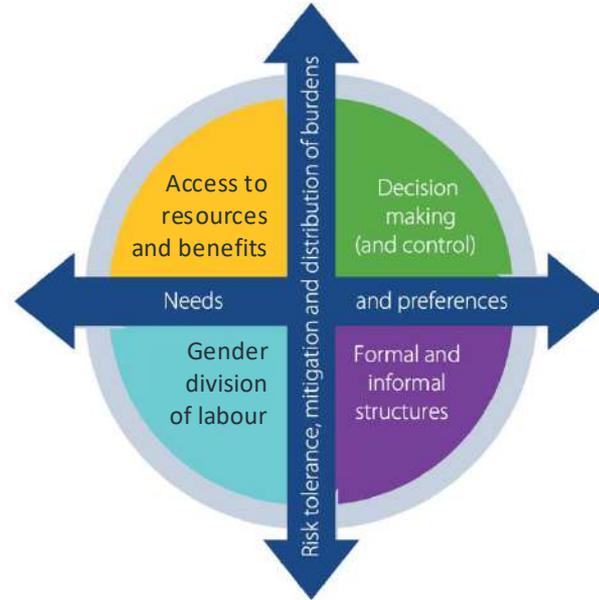
- *Governance spaces often mirror existing hierarchies. Participation does not ensure equitable influence.*

**Societal foundations:** Formal structures (e.g., policies) and informal ones (e.g., gender norms) shape how societies operate, reproducing (or changing) them.

- *Harmful gender norms frame men as 'real' leaders and sideline women as 'real' caregivers, reinforce GBV...*

**Unequal risk:** Different groups have different risk tolerance.

- *Research/innovation creates risks - distributes risks. Implications for those living in precarity?*

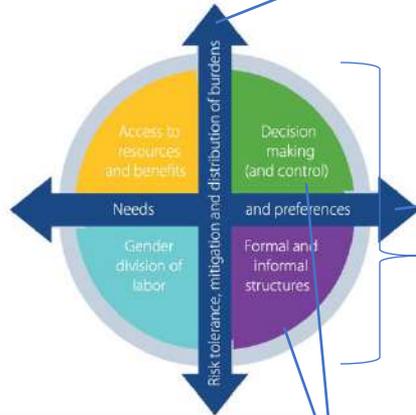


Source: McDougall et al., 2021.

**What people hope for, need and prioritize:** what different groups value and require in relation to their lives and livelihoods, communities, resources, and governance+.

- *Frequently missing from research?*

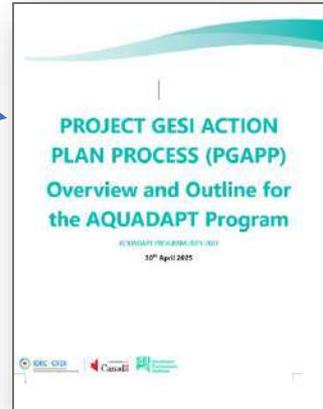
# Use examples



Social and gender risk analysis in fish feed innovations



Gendered trait preferences to inform client-responsive breeding programs



GESI scoping studies to inform:

- Design of NbS in Aquaculture research
- Inclusive Climate Finance



Deeper dive gender studies such as on Marine Protected Areas and gender

# A Materialist Feminist Framework for Gender Research

- An analytical approach rooted in **political economy** that takes **culture**, cultural constructions of gender, and power relations seriously, "deep theory of gender"
- Looks at intersections across political, economic, social, and cultural
- Starting point is focus on **gender relations**
- Multi-scalar analysis: Individual, Household/Family, Community, Market (local, regional, national, international), The State
- Historical

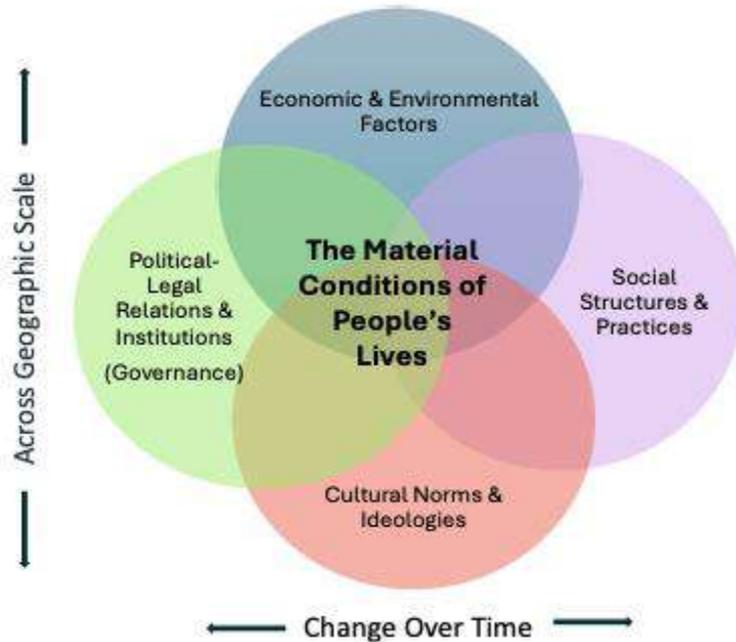
# Materialist Feminist Framework

## **Economic/Environmental:**

Resource base; organization of economy; livelihoods; access to resources & education; divisions of labor (productive, reproductive, community); wages; employment; mobility; markets; trade networks & value chains

## **Political-Legal:**

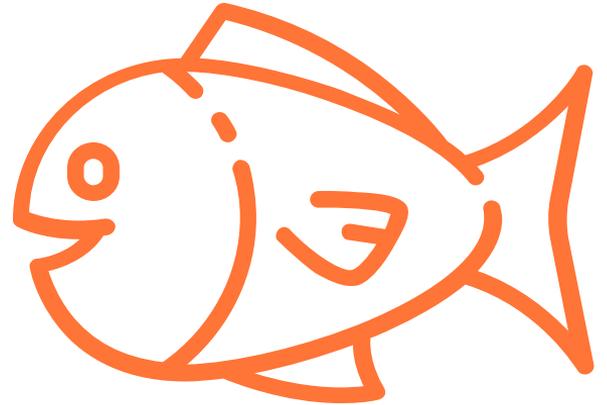
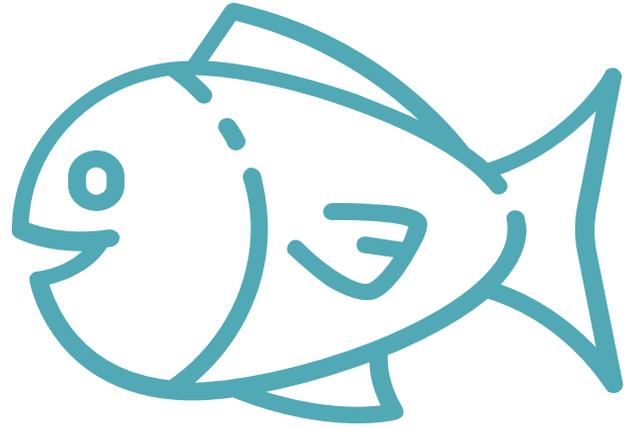
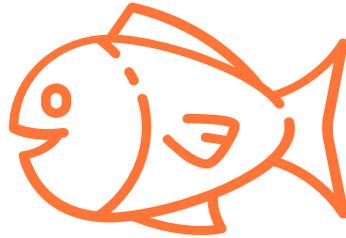
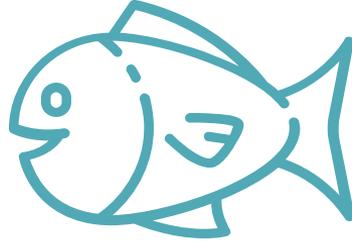
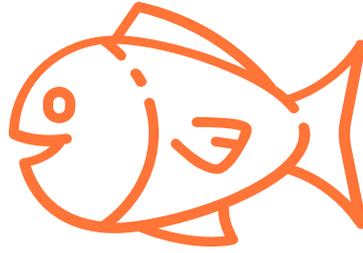
Rights of property, inheritance, voting, participation in governance, household decision-making; Power relations that structure access to rights and resources



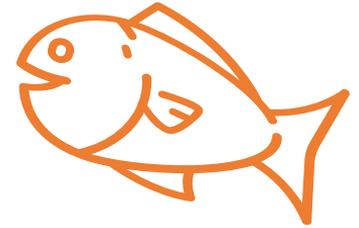
**Social:** Kinship, descent, systems; marriage/sexuality; household composition; family structure; social groups; social norms; social privilege

**Cultural:** identities; moral authority; norms, ideologies & beliefs; constructions of power and authority; notions of space (public/ private); mobility; social status

*Try to think beyond  
the individual to  
what social, cultural,  
political and  
economic structures  
they may be part of.*

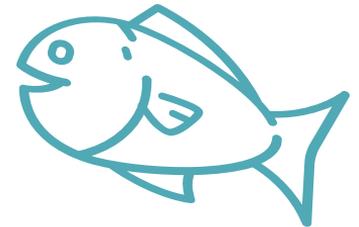


# Example Key Questions

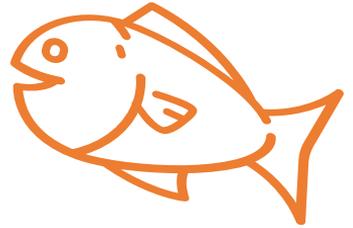


## **Political Economy/Environment:**

- What is the resource base?
- What are the divisions of labor in household and local economy?
- What livelihoods for whom? In what spaces do economic activities occur, who has access to those spaces, and why?
- How are property rights structured? Who has access to resources and property? Who controls access to resources?
- How is economic value generated by paid and unpaid labor?
- Who makes economic and political decisions and participates in resource governance?
- What kinds of technologies are needed or developed, for whom and for what tasks, and who benefits? How is technological innovation and adoption impacted by gender?



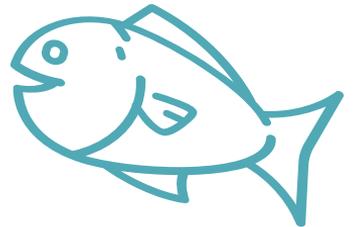
# Example Key Questions



## **Social-Cultural:**

- What norms/ideologies define masculinity, femininity, and gender relations?
- What cultural factors shape women's mobility and access to economic resources and ability to engage in economic activities? E.g., How is space defined in terms of gender
- How are households organized? How do gender relations structure kin systems and local communities

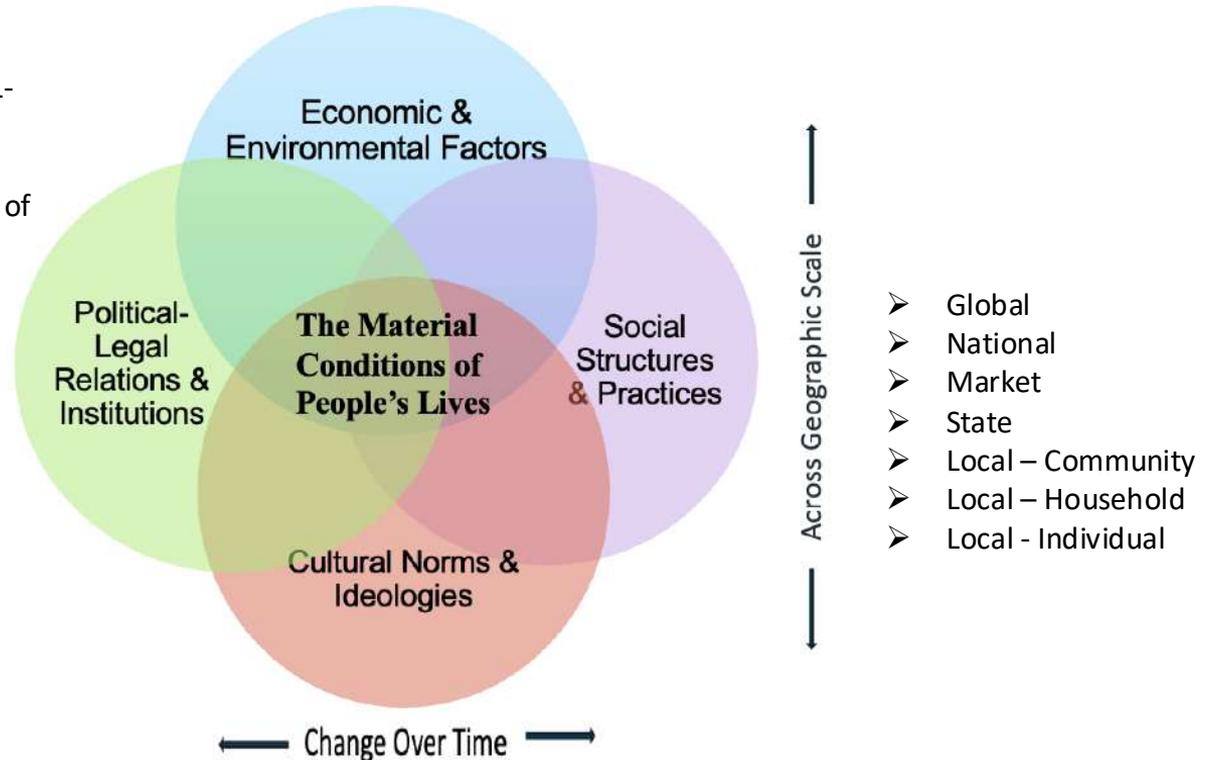
**Intersections:** How do social-cultural factors legitimize and reinforce political and economic structures and divisions? How does this change over time?



# For Example – Kerala Fisheries Research 1996-2018

**Political Economy:** Marine fishery; GDL-men fish, women process and market fish; technological transformation (trawlers, OBM); changes in geography of fishery; boat/net/asset ownership; market demand; market relations-community identity, gender; debt relations

**Social Cultural:** Caste/Society gender ideologies of work and sexuality; household structure



# 3. Hands on engagement

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# Case Study Exercise

**Situation:** Gleaning of shells, seaweed and invertebrates is an important economic activity for women in Country X, but their earnings remain low, and opportunities for occupational mobility are limited.

The government provides little support for the fisheries sector, and a recently established Marine Protected Area now restricts the areas women can glean. Poverty among women is widespread.

## Instructions:

1. Using a *Gender Roles* framework, what questions would you ask and what types of information would you need to understand the causes of problem and propose solutions?
2. Using a *Gender Relations/MF* framework, what questions would you ask and what types of information would you need to understand the causes of the problem and propose solutions?
3. How would each approach define the problem? What type of knowledge would each framework? What types of solutions would each propose?
4. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of each approach for achieving gender equity.

# 4. Wrapping up: Reflections and Resources

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# References and Other Resources



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# GAFS GAF Training Materials and Resources

## **GAF-101 Training Workshops**

- 2016: GAF 101 – 1-Day Training Workshop GAF 101: Theorizing Gender in Aquaculture & Fisheries Research, conducted by Marilyn Porter, Holly Hapke, Susana Siar, Kyoko Kusakabe @ GAF6, Bangkok, 3 August 2016 - [Link](#)
- 2018: Special GAF 101 workshop II: Using “Intersectionality” in Research on Gender and Fisheries and Aquaculture by Marilyn Porter, Holly Hapke and Kyoko Kusakabe - [Link](#)
- 2022: GAF 101 Training-Workshop: Gender Analysis in Aquaculture and Fisheries Social Science Research (AFSSRN, GAFS), convened by Neha W. Qureshi and Paul Ramirez- [Link-A](#) (all slide decks), [Link-B](#) (101 workshop programme)
- 2024: IIFET Pre-Conference Workshop – “Integrating Gender into Fisheries and Aquaculture Economics and Trade Research” by Holly Hapke, Carmen Pedroza-Gutiérrez, Cynthia McDougall, Kyoko Kusakabe, Tara Nair, Meryl Williams - [Link](#)

# GAFS GAF Training Materials and Resources

## **GAF7 Training Resources**

- 2018: *GAF training materials on theorising gender, intersectionality and gender rapid appraisals. “Gender Research in Fisheries and Aquaculture: A Training Handbook.”* USAID, Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section, Asian Fisheries Society, and SEAFDEC. [Download](#)
- 2018: *Photovoice manual. “Photovoice: Researching gender in aquaculture and fisheries through the camera lens.”* Dr Janine Pierce: Special Workshop 1: GAF7 manual. Aquaculture without Frontiers Australia, University of South Australia. [Download](#)