EXPANDING ROLES OF MEN AND WOMEN IN AQUATIC AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS AND THE IMPEDIMENTS IN TAPPING THIS POTENTIAL FOR INCREASING PRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES: THE CASE OF THE PHILIPPINES

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This paper attempted to describe the expanding roles of men and women in selected aquatic agricultural systems (AAS) areas in the Philippines and to identify the impediments in tapping this potential for increasing productive capacities. The data came from the Focus Group Discussions (FGD) conducted in August to October 2012 with fishers, farmers, women and youth and Key Informant Interviews (KII) in eight selected AAS areas (5 in Visayas and 3 in Mindanao) during the pre-scoping phase for the WorldFish CRP 1.3 in the Philippines. Secondary data supplemented the FGD and KII data.

Results show that men and women play roles at home and in the work area that are complementary and sometimes substitutes of each other. Men and women engage together or alone in many activities to earn income. The need for the husband and wife to work together (in farming, fishing or in other income earning activities) is necessary for economic survival. With women now doing more productive work, it is common among men to take care of household chores and the children. The challenges of restricted access to and control of resources (education, land, credit, information, technology, trainings), resource degradation, restricted market for produce, and persistence of biases in programs and policies impede the attainment of gains from expanded gender roles to improve productive capacities.