Gender in commercial aquaculture in Bangladesh

Kwasek K., Kantor P., Belton B., Choudhury A., Rashid M., Phillips M.
Aquaculture in Bangladesh

Reported Aquaculture Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production (kilotons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data: FAO)

www.aas.cgiar.org
www.worldfishcenter.org
www.newsecuritybeat.org
www.weadapt.org
Women in Aquaculture in Bangladesh

Homestead pond management
i.e. Feed preparation
Pond fertilization
Stocking
Harvesting
Women in Aquaculture in Bangladesh

- **20% increase** in fish production due to women’s participation (Shirajee et al. 2010)

Yet, women remain *invisible*
The Objectives

1. To assess *where* and *how* women are involved in commercial aquaculture in Bangladesh.

2. To provide recommendations on how to improve women’s opportunities in aquaculture.

3. To identify remaining knowledge gaps regarding women’s role in the commercial sector.
Methodology

2012 WorldFish/USAID “Feed the Future-Aquaculture” project:

Assessment tools:
• Focus group discussion;
• In-depth interviews (56 fish producers; 18 dealer/trader; 11 feed processing; 9 local handmade mills)
• Individual and key informant interviews with semi-structured questionnaires
• Information from each actor was validated by other actors;
• Secondary information from various sources collected and reviewed.

Sex disaggregated data
Results

Women and Men Employment in Aquaculture Value Chain in Bangladesh (% total workforce)

- Males: 94%
- Females: 6%

n=604

Gender in commercial aquaculture in Bangladesh (%)

- Fish Processing: Males 50%, Females 0%
- Local Mill: Males 15%, Females 0%
- Dealer Trader: Males 5%, Females 0%
- Fish Producer: Males 30%, Females 0%

zero women!
Results

(% total men/women employment)

MEN
- Fish Processing Industry: 58%
- Local Hand Made Mill: 32%
- Dealer/Trader: 7%
- Fish Producer: 3%

WOMEN
- Fish Processing Industry: 17%
- Local Hand Made Mill: 14%
- Dealer/Trader: 0%
- Fish Producer: 69%

n=570 (MEN)
n=35 (WOMEN)
Results

Reasons for Increasing Number of Women in Fish Production

Reasons for No Further Employment of Women in Fish Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits from women workers and plan for future employment of women</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you planning to hire women employees in the future?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No women worker + No plan for employing women</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are you planning to hire women employees in the future?

- Yes: 16 (30%)
- No: 15 (28%)
- No women worker + No plan for employing women: 23 (43%)

Total: 54 (100%)

Reasons for No Further Employment of Women in Fish Production

- Hard worker: 43%
- Bad worker: 29%
- Social constraints: 29%
Results

Perceived advantages/disadvantages of women employment in fish production

- Cheaper labor: 20%
- Sincere workers: 20%
- Work on time: 10%
- Women make high quality feed: 5%
- Social and safety issues: 20%
- No interest to work on a farm: 15%
- Work not suitable for women: 10%
- No advantages, not hard workers: 5%

% responses (n=41)
Conclusions

1. **Women participation** in commercial aquaculture is scarce.

2. Women are appreciated employees in aquaculture in Bangladesh.

   **Yet,**

3. Total of 70% fish producers have no interest in women employment in the future (safety, social constraints, etc.).

4. Sex disaggregated data is very limited.
Future research

• Do men and women have **equal access** to jobs in commercial fish production sector? Feed sector?

• What are the **barriers**?

• What are the effects of **gender imbalance**?

• What makes the already involved women employees undertake jobs in the commercial sector?
Thank you

http://www.worldfishcenter.org/featured/gender-equality-now