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**ASIC**  
Asian Seafood Improvement Collaborative

# ASIC Social and Gender Standard



Women Work in Fisheries, Too!  
November 29, 2021



Shaping the Future | Gender Justice for Sustainable Aquaculture and Fisheries



- Introduction to ASIC
- Development of the Standard
- Gender Throughout the Standard
- Gender Equality Principle
- Conclusion / Recommendations

# Topics

# Background

The **Asian Seafood Improvement Collaborative** is a burgeoning regional collaboration between private sector stakeholders from Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, and the Philippines to tackle **social and environmental sustainability** challenges facing the Asian seafood industry.



# Our Mission



To support Asian stakeholders and through collaboration, **create pathways for seafood improvement** that account for the social, environmental, and traceability challenges facing the region.

# Executive Committee



Rosanna Contreras  
(Chair)



Harry Yuli  
(Vice-Chair)



Dinna L. Umengan



Le Thanh Luu



Soe Tun



Saut Tampubolon



Nguyen Dung



Arlene (Jigz) Satapornvanit



# Steering Committee

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Fishery Officer, FAO

**Blake Stok**

Aquaculture Manager, Fair Trade USA

# The Problem

Most seafood certification programs mainly focus on environmental sustainability and do not consider social and economic well-being

Some certifications do include labour rights, but do not include community or gender issues. ASIC recognizes social sustainability as a holistic issue that impacts people with across supply chains

Certifications are not accessible to small-scale producers. ASIC standards are specifically adaptable to small-scale contexts with or without hired labour



# Our Contribution



Our goal is to create standards that recognize the complex realities of small-scale production, community rights, and particularly gender equality and women's empowerment.

ASIC is an improvement program that welcomes all farmers and fishers, regardless of their current performance with the goal of continuous improvement

ASIC can help connect those that can demonstrate high sustainability performance to more valuable markets



# Benefits for Workers and Producers

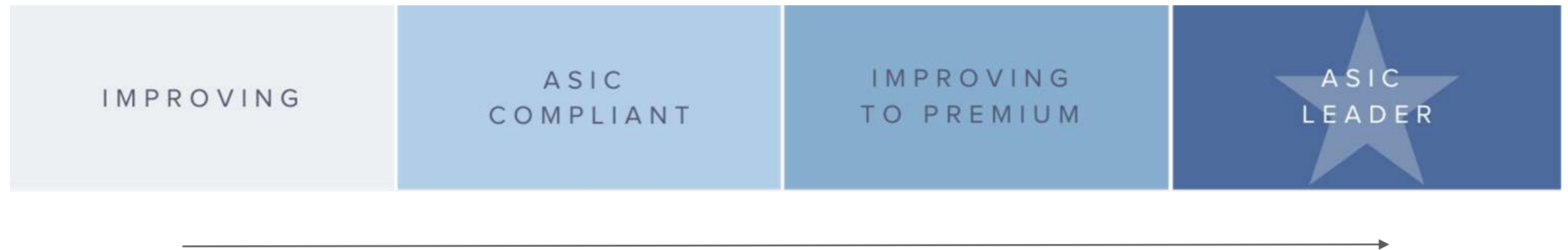


Improved labour conditions including health and safety, non-discrimination, and fair wage protections

Explicit steps to advance gender equality in the sector

Access to new markets

# ASIC'S MODEL FOR SOCIAL AND GENDER



ASIC is about **improvement**

Two-tiered structure:

1. ASIC Compliant - Minimum requirements
1. ASIC Leader - Menu of improvement option for continuous improvement

Social and Gender Standard structure aligns with the ASIC Environmental Standards

# ASIC FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES



1. No child labour
2. No forced labour, human trafficking, slavery or practices similar to slavery
3. Freedom of association
4. Equality and non-discrimination
5. Gender equality and women's economic empowerment (WEE)
6. Fair recruitment and decent working conditions
7. Safe working environment
8. Respect for local communities

# ASIC SOCIAL AND GENDER STANDARD

## **Principles 1: No child labour**

- Recognizes the unpaid care and domestic work of young women and girls
- Explicit reference to protecting children from harassment and abuse, including bullying and cyberbullying, as well as sexual harassment and abuse
- Requires the provision of child-care for workers' young children

## **Principles 2: No forced labour, human trafficking, slavery or practices similar to slavery**

- Explicit ban on the use of physical, sexual and verbal violence or abuse in disciplinary measures
- Labour brokers must be registered and migrant workers must be legally recruited, including the ban on all recruitment fees
- If workers do not live on site, transportation must be provided at no or reasonable cost

# ASIC SOCIAL AND GENDER STANDARD

## **Principles 3: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining**

- Worker representatives are required and must be representative of the demographics of the workplace, including gender and nationality
- Operations must collect sex-disaggregated data of grievances and remediation outcomes
- Remediation procedures must involve a worker representative
- All workers must have equitable, legitimate access to a grievance procedure, including all relevant education on their rights and methods to submit grievances

## **Principles 4: Equality and Non-Discrimination**

- Any gender disparities in pay, promotions, hiring, firing, etc. must be investigated and appropriate remediation action must be taken
- All reports of sexual harassment and abuse must be investigated by a team involving men and women. Victims must have access to counselling, medical and legal services.
- No worker can be subject to a pregnancy test, enquiries over marital status or family planning, or HIV/AIDS status at any point during recruitment or employment

# ASIC SOCIAL AND GENDER STANDARD

## **Principles 6: Fair Recruitment and Decent Working Conditions**

- All workers must earn at least the minimum wage and must earn an income sufficient to cover a decent standard of living (excluding overtime income)
- Nursing mothers are entitled to nursing breaks during their shifts as well as other accommodations to be voluntarily agreed upon between workers and their employer
- Operations can assist workers to set-up bank accounts, which can help to overcome the gender gap in financial services

## **Principles 7: Safe Working Environment**

- PPE and health and safety procedures must be suitable for women and young workers
- Where possible and appropriate, sleep and bathing facilities should be private and gender-disaggregated
- Feminine hygiene products must be available as well as safe, hygienic disposal facilities

# ASIC SOCIAL AND GENDER STANDARD

## Principles 8: Respect For Local Communities

- Social impact assessments must be gender-sensitive
- Farmer groups and shrimp operations must engage in gender-sensitive community consultation
- Farms and large operations must not bar resource users' access to communal resources, nor negatively impact their access to resources



# PRINCIPLE 5: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

## ASIC Compliant

- Steps must be taken to support women's participation in activities that will increase their opportunities to benefit from aquaculture/fishing livelihoods
- Leadership must make a commitment to gender equality in their supply chains

## ASIC Leader

- Operations recognize women's involvement and contributions to the sector
- Operations support reproductive rights
- Operations support women's educational and leadership opportunities
- Operations take steps to reduce the unequal distribution of unpaid care work





# Impact of COVID-19



- Standard development and finalization was delayed due to the cancellation of the Steering Committee meeting in February 2020
- Verification system was delayed due to inability to pilot
- Staff safety considerations reduced travel and opportunities to meet with partners
- Farmers impacted by COVID-19 were isolated from global supply chains

# Applying the Standards in the Sector



- Collaborative approach grounded in improvement and empowerment to foster equality across supply chains
- Engage the entire supply chain in improvement work
- Recognize diversity of needs, opportunities and perspectives
- Gender equality and social inclusion as a fundamental principle informing all processes and procedures
- Increased internal capacity and commitment to monitoring performance

# Policy Implications

- Protections for health, safety, and well-being of migrant workers and their families
- Predictable, living wages and social protection for all workers (formal and informal sectors)
- Importance of affordable child-care
- Recognition of women's work in the sector is necessary so that benefits are fairly distributed





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Thank you!



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