



Report on GAF7 (7th Global Conference on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries)

In 2018 the Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section (GAFS) of the Asian Fisheries Society (AFS) hosted its first standalone event: GAF7. This was an exciting opportunity to create a platform for sharing the latest gender in fisheries and aquaculture research, learning new methods and approaches, launching new training products and crafting a vision for the future of our research field. GAF7 followed 28 years of women and gender symposia and workshops supported by the AFS and its Indian Branch (see our milestones).

GAF7 hosted by the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) included 3 intense days of conference and side events plus a well-attended field trip. Event co-organizers included the GAFS, AIT and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA). It was sponsored by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (Platinum), WorldFish, The Crawford Fund, USAID Oceans and Fisheries, Plan International, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau and the Commission on Gender and Geography, and had 17 partners and supporters from Asia, Australia and beyond.

The 149 participants from 28 countries represented: Africa (4%); Asia (72%), Europe (5%), North America (7%), Oceania and Australia (7%) and South America and Caribbean (5%); 81% were women and 19% men.

Dr Eden Woon, President of AIT, welcomed the participants and Dr Darian McBain, Thai Union Global Director for Sustainable Development delivered the Keynote Address. Dr Amonrat Sermwatanakul, Senior Executive Expert in Fisheries Management, Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand, was presented with a special plaque recognising her promotion of gender equality in fisheries and aquaculture, including through receiving the Grand Award for “The Excellence on Human Right Protection and Gender Equality Promotion (Public Sector)” from the Prime Minister of Thailand.

GAF7 offered abundant choices among the 95 research presentations (78 oral and 17 posters), grouped into 8 thematic sessions and 9 workshops, run in 4 parallel sessions, each well-attended and including participatory learning techniques. Most importantly, discussions within the formal settings of sessions and workshops, as well as informal discussions in the hallways and over shared meals, participants explored GAF issues, shared experiences, learned from each other and built professional networks as well as friendships.

While discussing gender issues in aquaculture and fisheries, GAF7 didn't forget gender issues in conference participation either. We put theory into practice by offering free childcare services to all participants which allowed researchers/writers with young children to join in the immense sharing and learning experiences the conference offered.

During GAF7 there was also a focus on sharing the latest gender research approaches, including the gender transformative approach, and applying feminist intersectionality. Other areas were innovative technologies, women's collective action, and Photovoice.

SPECIAL WORKSHOPS

¹ <http://www.genderaquafish.org/gaf-section/milestones/>

² <https://www.gafconference.org/sponsors.htm>

³ <https://www.gafconference.org/program.htm>

I. Photovoice: Researching gender in aquaculture and fisheries through the camera lens (Janine Pierce)
II. GAF101: Using “Intersectionality” in Research on Gender and Fisheries and Aquaculture. A GAF 101 Training Session (Marilyn Porter and Holly Hapke)
III. Plan International Seas for Change (Sadiah Tahseen and Iris Caluag)
IV. Furthering/Deepening Feminist Perspectives in Fisheries (Nalini Nayak and Cornelia Quist)
V. Exploring Gender Equity and Equality in the SSF Guidelines (Danika Kleiber, Whitney Yadao-Evans, and Cynthia McDougall)
VI. Role of women fishworker organizations towards implementation and monitoring of small scale fisheries guidelines; case of African Women Network of Fish Processors and Traders (AWFISHNET) (Editrudith Lukanga and Kafayat Adetoun Fakoya)
VII. Gender transformative approaches in fisheries and aquaculture: An exploration of strategies and emerging outcomes (Cynthia McDougall)
VIII. Gender Analysis through Micro and Small Aquaculture Operation (MiSAO) Best Aquaculture Practises (M-BAP) (Zumilah Binti Zainalaludin)
IX. Mainstreaming gender in fisheries education (Mary Barby Badayos-Jover, Arpita Sharma, Kyoko Kusakabe, Salin Krishna and Kumi Soejima)

The outstanding student presenters were:

- **Angela L. Cruz** (presenter), Patrick J Christie and Alan T. White: *Addressing gender gaps from a programmatic perspective.*
- **Veena N** (presenter) and Kyoko Kusakabe: *Migrant women’s strategies to cope with employment practices in Thai food sector: A case study from Rayong and Trat.*
- **Sarah Lawless**: *From resistance to internalization: The spread of ‘gender equality’ in small-scale fisheries governance.*
- **Benedict Mark M. Carmelita** (presenter), Alice Joan G. Ferrer, Jinky C. Hopanda, Herminia A. Francisco, and Canesio D. Predo: *Gender differences in possession of unused livelihood skills and desire to be involved in livelihood opportunities in coastal households in the Philippines.*



Prize winners (L to R): Angela Cruz, Veena N, Sarah Lawless and Benedict Carmelita

Products and events

In addition to the GAF Conference website and E-book of abstracts, at the Conference, the GAF Section launched its new website and policy brief - *Fishing for Equality: Why gender matters in aquaculture and fisheries*. The policy brief highlights the key actions that are needed to make real progress toward gender equality—all of which were raised and discussed at the conference.

- ◆ To count women: key stakeholders, e.g., fisheries agencies need to collect regular and accurate gender-specific employment data on the catch-to-consumer pathway to track trends and progress.
- ◆ By supporting women's empowerment: women can collaborate, assert their rights and upgrade their capacity, which requires funding and support for education, advocacy and legal resources.
- ◆ To make women more visible: gender equality must be a stated priority in policy, research and development programs.
- ◆ Investment into targeted gender projects: research and educational outreach needs to increase significantly, even a hundredfold, to achieve impact.



Other GAF7 products and side events were:

- ◆ INFOFISH International magazine cover story *Expanding the Horizons: From Nurturing Fish to Nurturing Society* By Meryl Williams, Nikita Gopal, Kyoko Kusakabe, Arlene Nietes Satapornvanit, and Hillary Egna. INFOFISH INTERNATIONAL (September/October).
- ◆ USAID training materials: *Gender Research in Fisheries and Aquaculture: A Training Handbook*. USAID, Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section, Asian Fisheries Society, and SEAFDEC.
- ◆ *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.
- ◆ Plan International in Asia launched their new publication "*Into the Light: Young Female Migrant Workers in Thailand's Seafood Sector and their Access to Decent Work*"
- ◆ Winning entries from the "*Women in Seafood*" video competition organized by the International Association for Women in the Seafood Industry (WSI) were screened on the last day of the conference.
- ◆ *Caribbean Corner*: Conducted by the Gender In Fisheries Team (GIFT) led by the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados, this event focused attention on gender in fisheries in the Caribbean and the activities of CIFT, a GAF7 Partner.
- ◆ *Field Trip*: An excellent field trip, very well organised by the Thailand Department of Fisheries, enabled participants to see, first-hand, catfish production and processing, ornamental fish farm, fish landing site at Khlong 4.

⁴ <https://www.gafconference.org/program.htm>

⁵ https://www.gafconference.org/docs/gaf7_abstracts.pdf

⁶ <https://www.genderequality.genderaquafish.org/>

⁷ <https://www.seafdec-oceanspartnership.org/resource/gender-research-in-fisheries-and-aquaculture-a-training-handbook/>

⁸ <https://wsi-asso.org/2018-video-competition/>

GAF7 used media and outreach products to inform the participants and the public about the key events and findings: through six press stories, a concluding blog, vibrant social media commentary (under the hashtag #Fishing4 Equality) and other press stories.

- a. Media release: From catch to consumer: *Empowering, counting and hearing women in fisheries. Experts to gather at 7th Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Conference.*
- b. 6 media stories:
 - i. *Transforming gender relations in Caribbean to support SDGs*
 - ii. *Seaweed farming provides benefits for women and communities*
 - iii. *Photovoice: a high-impact research method that empowers women*
 - iv. *Financial literacy reduces risks of women from small islands in Philippines*
 - v. *Using intersectionality to address women's problems in fisheries*
 - vi. *A deeper feminist perspective to benefit fish and fishing communities*
- c. DevEx article *Where are the women in aquaculture and fisheries?* by Lisa Cornish.
- d. Blog - *Empowering, counting and hearing women: GAF7 showcases gender equality progress and challenges* by Kate Bevitt¹¹
- e. 12 media graphics used on Social Media feeds: WorldFish Transforming Gender Research – slides.¹²



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⁹ <https://www.gafconference.org/news.php>

¹⁰ <https://www.devex.com/news/where-are-the-women-in-aquaculture-and-fisheries-93696>

¹¹ <http://www.genderaquafish.org/2018/11/01/empowering-counting-hearing-women-gaf7-showcases-gender-equality-progress-challenges/>

¹² <https://spark.adobe.com/video/xO>