

## Women Professionals in ICAR Fisheries Institutes

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The participation of women in fisheries as professionals has been on an increase over the years. This paper attempts to examine the present status of women professionals in the seven central fisheries research institutes and one institute engaged in imparting fisheries education. All these are under ICAR. The parameters considered in the study were the total number of women scientists in the institutes, number of publications featuring women and participation of women scientists in training programmes and seminars/symposia etc. Women formed 13.92 percent of the total scientific force in fisheries research and education institutes. Their contribution as assessed from all available publications is commendable vis-a-vis their number in the system. However, their role in HRD and their exposure to professional forums through seminars, symposia etc. seem to be relatively less, probably due to the dual responsibilities (both professional and domestic) of women. The access to these programmes per se is, however, gender-neutral.

With more and more women seeking education in professional courses, the participation of women in professional

fields has been on an increase over the years. This trend is gaining in strength with an increasing number of qualified women seeking employment in diverse fields like education, administration, development, research and extension.

This paper attempts to examine the present status of women professionals in the fisheries research sector. The study is restricted to ICAR institutes dealing exclusively with fisheries research, education and extension.

The ICAR has the following eight institutes engaged in research in various aspects of fisheries:

- ◆ Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA), Chennai
- ◆ Central Inland Capture Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI), Barrackpore
- ◆ Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA), Bhubaneswar
- ◆ Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE), Mumbai
- ◆ Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Cochin
- ◆ Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Cochin

- ◆ National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR), Lucknow, and

- ◆ National Research Centre on Cold Water Fisheries (NRC on CWF), Bhimtal, Uttaranchal.

The data on scientists working in the above institutes were collected for the purpose of this paper. The parameters considered were the total number of women scientists, number of publications featuring women and participation of women scientists in training programmes and seminars/symposia etc. The information was collected from the Annual Reports of the respective institutes pertains to only one year. Data from CIBA, CICFRI and CIFA was collected for 1998-99 and from CIFE, CIFT, CMFRI, NRC on CWF and NBFGR for 1999-2000. The data of all the institutes were used together for the sake of analysis as it was assumed that there would be no significant change in the parameters selected between the two years.

### Women scientists in ICAR's Fisheries Research Institutes

**Number:** The number of women scientists in the fisheries research institutes is presented in Table 1. It can be observed therefrom that there are 71 women scientists out of a total scientific force of 510 in the ICAR's fisheries research set-up. It was estimated that 8 percent of fisheries scientists in ICAR, on an average, were women (Rao and Shenoy, 1998). The present position, as in 1998-99, however, is that the percentage ranged from 4.41 in CIFRI to 20.67 in CMFRI. Considering this, the percentage of women engaged in research activities in fisheries has to be reckoned as higher than the national average at 13.92 per cent.

**Publications:** The contribution of

**Table 1: Number of women scientists in ICAR fisheries institutes**

S.No	Institute	No. of women scientists	Total no. of scientists	% of women scientists to total no. of scientists
1.	CIBA	6	55	10.91
2.	CICFRI	3	68	4.41
3.	CIFA	4	56	7.14
4.	CIFE	9	56	16.07
5.	CIFT	14	90	15.56
6.	CMFRI	31	150	20.67
7.	NBFGR	2	22	9.09
8.	NRC on CWF	2	13	15.38
<b>Total (all institutes)</b>		<b>71</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>13.92</b>

**Table 2: Number of Publications with Women Scientists as Authors  
(Main or Co-Authors)**

1	2	3	4	5	6
S.No.	Institute	No. of publications with women scientists as the authors*	Total no. of publications	3 as a % of 4	3 as % of number of women scientists
1.	CIBA	6	57	10.53	100.00
2.	CICFRI	3	149	2.01	100.00
3.	CIFA	9	166	5.42	225.00
4.	CIFE	34	201	16.92	377.78
5.	CIFT	22	83	26.51	157.14
6.	CMFRI	21	87	24.14	
7.	NBFGR	7	62	11.29	350.00
8.	NRC on CWF	5	29	17.24	250.00
<b>Total (all institutes)</b>		<b>107</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>12.83</b>	

(\* Publications featuring more than one woman author were taken as a single published work)

**Table 3: Participation of Women Scientists in HRD Programmes**

1	2	3	4	5	6
S.No.	Institute	No. of women scientists who attended HRD programmes	Total no. of scientists who attended HRD programmes	3 as a % of 4	3 as % of number of women scientists
1	CIBA	1	13	7.69	16.67
2	CICFRI	0	1	0.00	0.00
3	CIFA	4	27	14.82	100.00
4	CIFE	2	7	28.57	22.22
5	CIFT	5	17	29.41	35.71
6	CMFRI	2	10	20.00	6.45
7	NBFGR	1	14	7.14	50.00
8	NRC on CWF	0	1	0.00	0.00
<b>Total (all institutes)</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>16.67</b>	<b>21.13</b>

women toward research effort can be gauged by the number of their published research output. 107 out of 834 publications featured women as one of the authors (Table 2).

The percentage ranged from 5.42 in CIFA to 26.51 in CIFT. The overall percentage was 12.83. These figures are more than commensurate with the number and percentage of women in the total scientific force. Considering the publications by women scientists as a percentage of their number, it can be observed that in most of the institutes it is 100 per cent or above indicating one or more publication per woman scientist. The overall percentage is 151% for all the institutes taken together.

**Participation in HRD programmes:**

HRD is an important aspect in updating the knowledge base of the scientific community. The ICAR also lays stress on scientists and other personnel to attend short and long-term programmes to keep abreast with the latest developments in their fields. Out of a total of 90 scientists who underwent training, 15 were women (Table 3). The percentage ranged from nil in CICFRI and NRC on CWF to 29.41 in CIFT.

The overall percentage was 16.67. The training programmes attended by women are largely professional in nature with a technical bias. The percentage of women trained in subjects related to management was relatively less and this can be related to the fact that the number of

women in managerial positions is negligible. The number of scientists deputed abroad was very few and none of them were women.

As a percentage of the total number of women scientists, those who were trained constituted 21.13% indicating that on the whole only one in five women attended training programmes. Although access to training opportunities is not gender-specific, for encouraging women to take part in them, the timing and duration of the programmes need to be planned keeping in view their dual responsibilities (professional as well as domestic) (Rao and Shenoy, 1998).

**Participation in seminars/symposia etc:** Dissemination of scientific findings/

Table 4: Participation of Women Scientists in Seminars/Symposia etc.

1	2	3	4	5	6
S.No.	Institute	No. of women scientists who attended seminars /symposia etc	Total no. of scientists who attended seminars /symposia etc	3 as a % of 4	3 as % of number of women scientists
1	CIBA	3	24	12.50	50.00
2	CICFRI	1	17	5.88	33.33
3	CIFA	0	21	0.00	0.00
4	CIFE	5	19	26.32	55.56
5	CIFT	10	43	23.26	71.43
6	CMFRI	11	58	18.97	35.48
7	NBFGR	2	8	25.00	100.00
8	NRC on CWF	1	8	12.50	50.00
<b>Total (all institutes)</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>16.75</b>	<b>46.48</b>

information and critical reviews there of takes place in events like seminars, symposia, conferences etc. They also offer first hand feed back about a researcher's work. 33 women scientists attended seminars/symposia etc., out of a total of 197 (Table 4). The percentage ranged from nil in CIFA to 26.32 in CIFE. The overall percentage of women scientists who attended seminars/symposia etc., was 16.75 per cent. On the whole, one in two women attended these professional gatherings, as indicated by the percentage in relation to the total number of women scientists (46.48%).

It can be assumed that the women professionals taking part in seminars/symposia/conferences etc., are also members of professional societies since a majority of such programmes are organised by professional bodies (Rao and Shenoy, 1998).

Incidentally, the participation of men scientists in HRD programmes and seminars/symposia etc., as a percentage of their number in the system was 17.08% and 37.36% respectively, indicating the gender-neutrality of these activities (Table 5).

**Others:** Besides the above factors, it was observed that the representation of women in committees other than in-house committees was negligible. Only CIFT reported the existence of women's cell at the institute level.

Table 5: Participation of Men Scientists in HRD Programmes and Seminars, Symposia etc. (Total for all institutes)

1	2	3
Programmes	Number of men who attended	Participation of men a % of total number of men scientists*
HRD	75	17.08
Seminars/Symposia etc.	164	37.36

(\*Total number of men scientists = 439)

### Conclusions

Women have been performing progressively well in fisheries professional sphere and this is visible from the increasing participation of women in fisheries research and development. Their contribution to fisheries research in ICAR as assessed from the published works is commendable vis-a-vis their number in the system. However, HRD and greater exposure to professional forums through seminars, symposia etc. seem relatively less. This might be due to the dual responsibility of women and the pressure it generates on their time. Better planning of HRD programmes by making them gender sensitive can mitigate this problem. The access to these programmes *per se* is, however, gender-neutral.

### References

1. Annual Report, CIBA (1998-99)
2. Annual Report, CICFRI (1998-99)
3. Annual Report, CIFA (1998-99)
4. Annual Report, CIFT (1999-2000)

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