INTRODUCTION

Developing human and institutional capacity in aquaculture has long been a pillar of AquaFish’s overall mission to enrich livelihoods and promote health. Aquaculture is an increasingly important tool for overcoming poverty, but its success relies on responsible, well-informed users. With a growing international network of trained aquaculture professionals, AquaFish is able to support the next generation of aquaculturists through reliable, high-quality information generated through a continuous pipeline of knowledgeable aquaculture researchers and professionals.

Gender Equality

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Providing equal educational and training opportunities for men and women in aquaculture is a critical component of AquaFish’s capacity building effort. AquaFish recognized that marginalization of women within the sector, the chronic social and economic inequalities, and the vulnerable roles held by women in aquaculture and fisheries sectors hamper development goals. As aquaculture continues to expand, it is critical to ensure that men and women alike have access to advances in aquaculture development and the potential benefits of new growth.

AquaFish is helping women empower themselves through providing training and education that offer the tools needed to increase bargaining power and open up new career opportunities. A gender inclusiveness strategy is integrated into each of the core research projects sponsored by AquaFish, and each project has at least one gender-focused investigation.

Increasing Access for Women

AquaFish is increasing opportunities for women in aquaculture and fisheries by using Gender Integration Benchmarks. For projects completed from 2006-2011, benchmarks included:

- 50% female participation at all sponsored activities.
- Collecting and analyzing disaggregated data from individual projects to gauge the success of gender integration activities.
- Tailoring specific extension and technical services related to sustainable aquaculture and aquatic resource management to women along the aquaculture value chain.

Short-term Training

AquaFish has helped train over 7000 people through short-term workshops and training events held in 19 different host countries since AquaFish’s inception in 2006. Participants represent a diverse demographic ranging from fishers and farmers to academics and government officials. The interdisciplinary, cross-cutting research conducted by AquaFish represents a diverse demographic ranging from fishers and farmers to academics and professionals.

Long-term Training Since 2006, AquaFish has supported 344 long-term degrees, including Bachelor’s, Master’s, and PhDs. Nearly half (48%) of these degrees were awarded to women. Almost all long-term training remains in-country, enabling significant cost-savings and allowing students to gain from network development. Institutions benefit from the growth and continuation of academic programs, and host countries benefit from research on the ground, as well as retention of expertise.

- 99% of students trained in the US return to their home country to contribute
- 100% of students trained in Host Countries remain to contribute