

## GENDER STRATEGY

The AquaFish Innovation Lab leads research and capacity-building efforts to reduce poverty and hunger in developing nations by advancing sustainable aquaculture development and responsible aquatic resource management. AquaFish is in alignment with the US Government's Feed the Future Initiative and is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and institutions in the US and participating Host Countries.

AquaFish engages women in every aspect of aquaculture, from administration to research to education. To advance social and economic development through aquaculture and fisheries, women and men need equitable access to assets and opportunities.



While women's representation in aquaculture and fisheries has improved in recent years, research shows that women are not remaining in the field at the same rate as men, a phenomena known as the "leaky pipeline." To address this, AquaFish has adopted a multifaceted approach to promote gender equality and increase the retention of women in the aquaculture pipeline upon completion of training.

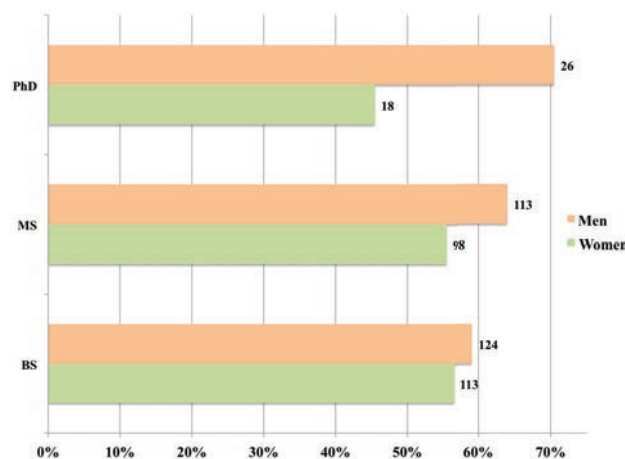
### GENDER INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

- Require a Gender Inclusiveness Strategy from every project prior to implementation
- Require at least one outreach activity focused on women or girls as a component of every project
- Identify and address root causes that create gender inequalities or obstacles in aquaculture and fisheries
- Ensure that women are included in all AquaFish activities, from planning to completion
- Work toward gender balance in research and training opportunities

## WOMEN IN RESEARCH

Successful aquaculture development depends on building and sustaining a gender-balanced community of students and professionals. To achieve this, AquaFish works to ensure that women make up at least half of participants in project leadership positions and in both short-term (short courses, seminars, workshops, internships, study tours) and long-term trainings (high school diplomas, trade certificates, Bachelor's and Master's degrees, PhDs, and post doctoral studies).

### GENDER BREAKDOWN OF AQUAFISH LONG-TERM TRAINEES FROM 2006-2015 BY DEGREE TYPE



### VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS

To better understand gaps in the industry, each AquaFish project includes at least one investigation that focuses on value chain analysis. Regardless of whether the flow of goods is connected by a short, local value chain or a long export chain, women are often in critical but vulnerable positions in the aquaculture value chain. Actions that favor either end of the chain or shorten it could marginalize women by damaging their ability to participate in the value chain.

AquaFish addresses value chain issues to support local producers, enhance access to market information, and build capacity to enable participants to ensure a consistent and reliable supply.

## CURRENT GENDER EFFORTS

### ASSESSING VALUE OF COMMONLY CONSUMED FISH IN CAMBODIA FOR WOMEN'S NUTRITION

Fish are an important component of the Cambodian diet, but there is a lack of documentation of commonly consumed species and their corresponding nutrient content. AquaFish research in Cambodia addressed this information deficit by determining the vitamin and mineral content of the most commonly consumed fish species and presented results to Cambodian women's groups for improved awareness of the nutritional benefits of these species.

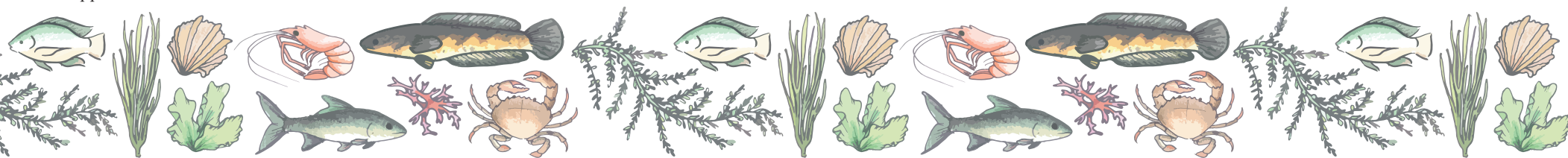
### BUILDING INDUSTRY CAPACITY THROUGH CELL-PHONE NETWORKS IN UGANDA AND GHANA

Access to information and resources is key to economic growth and critical to women's participation in fishery value chains. Cell phones are used to obtain market prices when deciding where to sell products, access extension support, and arrange for feed and seed. Two AquaFish studies obtained baseline information about the needs of fish farmers as they relate to cell-phone use. Increasing access to market information and knowledge transfer via cell-phone networks can help strengthen the vulnerable positions in the aquaculture value chain which are often occupied by women.



### SCHOOL PONDS IN NEPAL

School farms can be used to educate rural communities in fish farming and the nutritional value of fish. AquaFish partners in Nepal built ponds, educated students, and trained women in fish farming and its role in household health. The study also helped train teachers, who can then spread knowledge about the nutritional value of fish and opportunities for additional income-generation through aquaculture to community members.



## WOMEN IN FOOD PRODUCTION

Women represent 40% of the global labor force, produce more than half of the food in developing countries, bear most of the responsibility for household food security, and increasingly contribute to the household through income-generating activities. However, their potential to contribute to broad goals such as agriculture sector growth, improved nutrition, and climate adaptation is limited by:

- Restricted market opportunities
- Lack of access to education
- Unequal economic participation
- Unequal decision-making



In aquaculture, women often lack decision-making power and are perpetually employed in vulnerable positions, working as fry catchers, laborers, and as low-paid workers at processing plants. Women face lower wages, longer hours, and low job security.

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Both women and men are vital to the viability of the aquaculture industry in developing countries. Also known as “gender mainstreaming,” Gender Integration factors women into the planning, design, and implementation of a policy or program. The early-stage approach of considering women within development objectives serves to improve fairness and operationalize gender equity.

Because women are more likely to reinvest income in the welfare of their children, investments in women are predicted to yield benefits across generations.



### AQUAFISH PROJECT COUNTRIES SINCE 2006



*The AquaFish mission is to enrich livelihoods and promote health by cultivating international multidisciplinary partnerships that advance science, research, education, and outreach in aquaculture and fisheries.*

## GENDER INTEGRATION IN AQUACULTURE



**AQUAFISH**  
INNOVATION LAB

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