

## **Women in fisheries - in search of equal opportunities**

Last November marked the third anniversary of "[\*The Santiago de Compostela Declaration for Equal Opportunities in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector\*](#)", an important milestone in the recognition of the role of women in fisheries. In addition, this year has been recognised by the FAO as the "[\*International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022\*](#)" (IYAFA) in which one of its key messages is the achievement of "gender equality and equity" and the [improvement of its working conditions](#).

Although women are present in all the [activities of the fishing value chain](#), their invisibility has led to the absence of adequate [gender awareness](#), which often leads to a lack of knowledge of the problems and challenges they face.

The main needs identified in terms of diversification are as follows:

- Raise awareness: improving the visibility of women's contribution to the fisheries sector.
- Strengthen science-policy interface, as well as programmes and instruments that recognise and emphasise the importance of social protection in fisheries and aquaculture<sup>1</sup>.
- Empower stakeholders and partnerships: improve women's association and representation in decision-making that affects the development of their [activities](#).
- Expand education and training: in order to professionalise their work.
- Identify the needs of women working in the local fisheries sector in the [SFPAs](#), include women as stakeholders to be interviewed for the fisheries agreement evaluations and link their requests to sectoral support in order to achieve development of their fisheries sector.
- Improve the international and national legal framework of each country, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5, SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 14...), the promotion of the blue economy and the International Ocean Governance.

We must continue to work to incorporate regulatory frameworks that ensure non-discrimination, equal treatment and improved working conditions, all of which are the fundamental basis for eliminating the structural barriers that hinder women's access to the sector.

We hope that in the near future many of these obstacles will be removed!

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<sup>1</sup> i.e: FAO's programmes and instruments including the [Blue Growth Initiative](#), [the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication](#), and the [Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries](#).