

Supporting the Development of Sustainable Aquaculture and Fisheries through Capacity Building and Gender Integration

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Introduction

The Aquaculture & Fisheries Collaborative Research Support Programs (AquaFish CRSP), one of ten CRSPs created by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), works towards improvements in aquaculture and fisheries practices in developing countries to reduce poverty in socially and environmentally sustainable ways. This goal is pursued through strong multidisciplinary and international partnerships that advance science, education, and outreach. Providing benefits to both the US and international aquaculture and fisheries sectors, AquaFish CRSP partnerships currently exist between 16 US and 29 Host Country institutions in 20 countries (Figure 1). One of the objectives of the AquaFish CRSP is to build and strengthen capacity in developing countries through training and outreach activities. These activities take a number of forms, including short-term (non-degree) training and long-term (degree) programs at Host Country and US universities. Equitable access to training resources is a goal of the AquaFish CRSP, allowing our capacity building efforts to reach a broader population.



Fig 1. Active AquaFish CRSP research sites

Short-Term Training

Short-term training is under 6 months in duration and typically includes seminars, workshops, short-courses, and internships. Workshops focus on training Host Country extension specialists, fisheries officers, local fish farmers, processors, vendors, small business owners, and NGOs.

Since the program's inception in September 2006, AquaFish CRSP projects have held over 100 short-term training sessions with over 3,106 participants, of which approximately 34% were women. During FY10, 25 short-term AquaFish CRSP training sessions were run under the eight core research projects for 694 trainees, 275 (39.6%) were women and 419 (60.4%) were men. Of these, 11 training sessions were held in the Asian region (6 in Cambodia, 2 in the Philippines, 2 in Vietnam, and 1 in Nepal), 8 were held in Latin America and the Caribbean (5 in Mexico, 2 in Nicaragua, and 1 in Guyana), and 6 were held in Africa (2 in Ghana, 2 in Tanzania, 1 in Kenya, and 1 in Uganda) (Figure 2).

Example workshops in FY10:

- Training course on snakehead breeding and weaning (Vietnam)
- Series of workshops for women on milkfish postharvest procedures (Philippines)
- Workshop focusing on production of native species aquaculture (Guyana)
- Integrated aquaculture/agriculture workshop (Mexico)

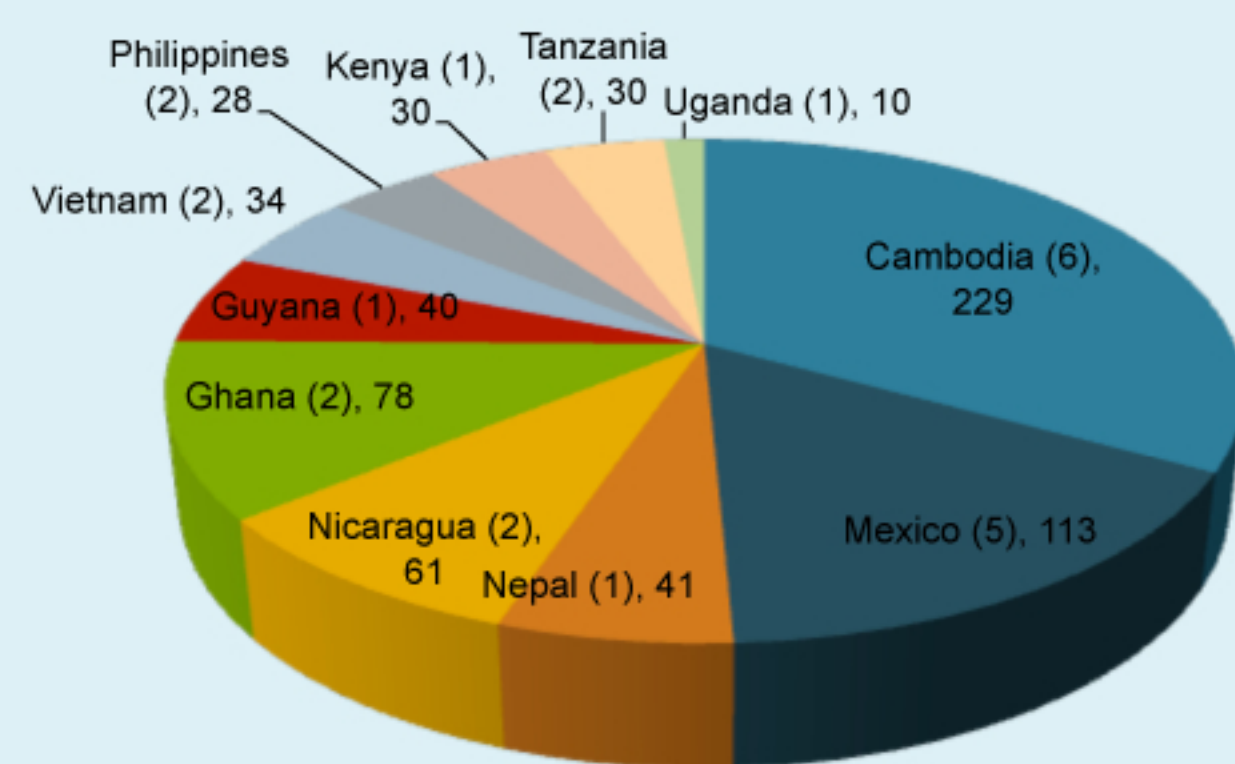


Figure 2. Numbers of participants in AquaFish CRSP short-term training events, by country. Numbers in parentheses indicate number of short-term training events held in each country.



Women traders giving applause during a workshop in Kenya



Native Gar Training in Mexico



Sahar and tilapia polyculture workshop in Nepal

Long-Term Training

Long-term training is defined as formal training occurring in an academic setting lasting 6 months or longer and culminating in either an academic degree or a technical certificate. Direct involvement in AquaFish CRSP research projects provides Host Country and US students opportunities for both academic training and experience, ensuring positive impacts on international development. Long-term training typically takes the form of participation in degree programs (BS, MS, or PhD) at higher education institutions, either in the US, in a participating Host Country, or in a third country. The hope is that these students will be the next researchers and research administrators in aquaculture, fisheries, and the broader science disciplines.

Since program inception, long-term training efforts have supported a total of 273 students, including 48% of who were women. In FY10, the AquaFish CRSP supported the long-term training programs of 196 degree program students, including 109 men and 87 women (55.6% and 44.4% respectively). These students represent 22 countries, including Brazil, Cambodia, China, Ecuador, Eritrea, Ghana, Guyana, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mexico, Micronesia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, the Philippines, Samoa, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, the U.S., and Vietnam.

Among the 196 students supported in FY10, 73 are seeking BS degrees (57.5% men and 42.5% women); 98 are seeking MS degrees, (53.1% men and 46.9% women); and 21 are seeking PhD's (57.1% men and 42.9% Women) (Figure 3).

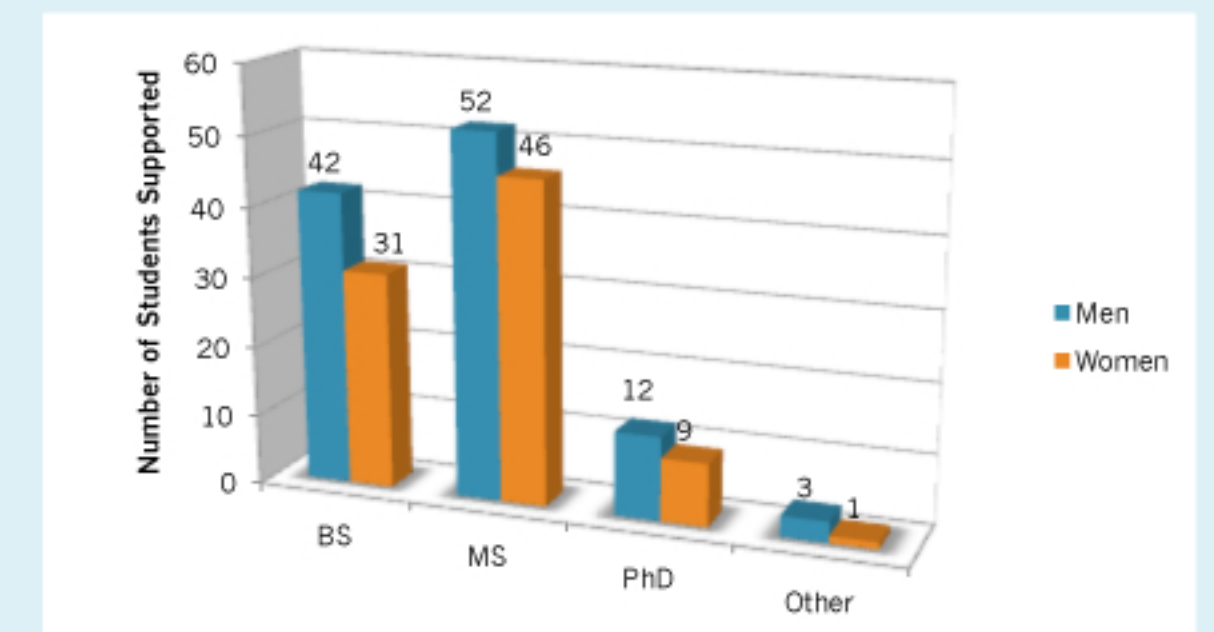


Figure 3. AquaFish CRSP long-term training for FY10, separated by degree and gender



Gender Integration

The AquaFish CRSP has long recognized the marginalization of women, the social and economic inequalities, and the prominent vulnerable positions that women occupy in the aquaculture and fisheries sectors.

Specific actions taken by the CRSP include: collecting and analyzing gender disaggregated data, setting a 50% benchmark for training women, and each core project has a gender strategy and a gender focused investigation. These sustained efforts are helping to increase the number of women in academic, entrepreneurial, and governmental positions as well as increase their visibility in trainings and through community and regional involvement.

Through equity in training opportunities, the CRSP has been able to provide women the tools to empower themselves, increase bargaining power, and enter new career opportunities.



Gladys Kuria, an MS student at Moi University in Kenya, sets up an integrated culture system to study feed recycling in tilapia ponds at the Mwea Aqua Fish Farm (MAFF).



Gertrude Atukunda, CRSP investigator, recording data with two young female scientists at the Kajjansi Aquaculture Research and Development Center (KARDC) in Uganda.



Lucero Vazquez Cruz, a graduate student at the Autonomous Juarez University of Tabasco in Mexico, studies how bacteria can degrade the steroid, methyltestosterone.



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