

FOREWORD

We organized the Global Symposium on Women in Fisheries through the recommendation made in the International Symposium on Women in Fisheries held four years ago in Chiangmai, in conjunction with the 5th Asian Fisheries Forum. We are pleased to see the number of participants involved in women in fisheries issues growing. The Symposia have also attracted interested men and women who participated actively in the discussions. From women issues at the Asian level, which was the main focus of the Chiangmai Symposium, we have moved towards issues at the global level in the Kaoshiung Symposium. This time, participants from all corners of the earth met to discuss this very important topic.

After the failures in many of the development projects planned by international agencies in the 1960s and 1970s, where women were excluded in the planning and implementation phase, experts realized that the sustainability of projects require the participation from both women and men—not as woman and man per se, but as a community. This Symposium and the earlier one, although largely focusing on women, also raised several gender issues, among which were the involvement of communities in the *sapyaw* fishery in the Philippines, and the vulnerability of fishers and their families to HIV/AIDS.

The next logical step is to move towards gender and fisheries (GAF), instead of focusing just on women. The methodology developed in gender and development (GAD) programs could be utilized for GAF studies, so that the constraints and inequity among men and women may be better understood, and recommendations made to overcome the inequity. The next Symposium in Penang in 2004, will definitely see more papers devoted to issues of gender inequity in the fisheries sector and means to address them.

This Symposium, like the last one, would not have materialized, if not for the generous support of our sponsors. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade/New Zealand Agency for Overseas Development (NZAOD), and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

This Proceedings is by no means the definitive work on women in fisheries at the global level. We feel that such a work is not yet possible given the dearth of data and lack of developed methods for studying the field. Nevertheless, we hope that it will be another waypoint along the road, and it will contribute towards better comprehension of some of the issues.

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