COMMUNIQUE

TRAINING OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN AQUACULTURE VALUE CHAIN AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

24-26 FEBRUARY 2020
CAIRO, ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT
I. INTRODUCTION

1. A Training workshop for women and youth in aquaculture value chain and business development was organised by the African Union- Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) in collaboration with the Government and People of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The meeting was held from the 24-26 February 2020 in Safir Hotel, Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.

2. The workshop was supported by African Union Member states.

3. The main objective of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of women and youth from African Union member states involved in aquaculture practices, fish processors, small and medium enterprise in aquaculture value chain and business skills development.

II. PARTICIPATION

The workshop was attended by 39 participants comprised of 24 selected women and youth involved in aquaculture activities and business enterprises from the following countries: Algeria, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia, 8 Trainers comprising of independent Experts coming from Universities, Research Centres and private sector. Also in attendance were representatives from the Central Laboratory Agriculture Research in Egypt, two technical facilitators (Prof. Amira El-Hanafy and Prof. Gamal El Naggar) and staff members of AU-IBAR.

5 The selected rapporteurs for this meeting were Mr Pierre Guebama (Cameroon) and Mr Tine Khadim (Senegal); Ms Priscilla Longwe (Malawi), Ms Fatmata Kula Sesay (Sierra Leone) and Ms Hellen Moepi (South Africa) as the leader.

Day 1:

III. OPENING SESSION

The opening session was facilitated by Dr Mohamed Seisay, Senior Fisheries Officer of AU-IBAR.
Remarks were made by the following:

a. **Statement by the Director of the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research, Prof Dr. Amira El-Hanafy**

In her opening remark, Prof Dr. Amira El-Hanafy mentioned that fish is the most important source of animal protein in Egypt. The government pays attention to development its various sources as it is the best solution to bridge the protein gap and meet the individual needs of animal protein. The sustainable agriculture development strategy 2030 adopts to increase fish production from its various sources and thus increase the average per capita consumption of animal protein. Egyptian government represented by the Ministry of Agriculture and its affiliated institutions plays a positive and effective role in Africa where many integrated fish farms were established in some African countries and several cooperation protocols in research and training field were also done. She appreciated the selection of the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR) as one of the African Union Centres of Excellence in Aquaculture on the continent.

b. **Welcoming Remarks by the Director AU-IBAR, Prof Ahmed El-sawahly**

The Director of AU-IBAR thanked the participants for accepting AU-IBAR’s invitation to this training. He recognised that aquaculture has potential to meet the food and nutritional gaps in lieu of depleting fish stocks in the wild. However the developmental status of aquaculture in Africa is far from realising this potential. Aquaculture stands at 2 million metric tonnes per annum and is by far means cover the gap in fisheries. Egypt and Nigeria constitutes 60-70 % of aquaculture production. There is a need to adopt best practices and mechanism to overcome barriers and increase aquaculture production. Another challenge is productive engagement of women in aquaculture production. Production is far from encouraging including lack of technical know-how, lack of business development. Hence empowerment and the case of preferential training for women and youth are key instrumental in developing aquaculture development. Lastly he mentioned that priority areas for enhancing the role of women and youth in aquaculture have been identified during previous meetings and this meeting is the implementation of those recommendations. The target group for this training is women and youth. He expressed deep gratitude to the government and people of Egypt, as well as for presence of the Vice President of ARC (Aquaculture Research centre in Egypt) and the Director of CLAR in the meeting.
c. Official opening by the President of the Agriculture Research Centre

The Vice President for Production in the Agriculture Research Center (ARC), Prof. Dr. Samy Anwar Darwish on behalf of the President of the ARC, Prof Mohamed Soliman Mohamed gave the opening statement. He started by appreciating AU-IBAR for the kind invitation to conduct the official opening of the meeting. He welcomed the delegates to Egypt. He noted that he was personally overwhelmed and honoured for Egypt to host the training, organized by African Union, on women and youth in aquaculture. He stressed that aquaculture is an important component in sustaining in animal protein supply and. He informed the workshop participants that Egypt produced 1.8 million tons of fish in 2018; this production is contributing significantly to the availability and accessibility to animal protein. The fish consumption rate in Egypt is 18-19 kg per capita/year. Egypt is playing a leading role in developing aquaculture and CLAR is important in developing aquaculture. He was happy with the fact that this is an interactive workshop, and CLAR is equipped with galaxy of experts who shall be sharing their experience in this field with the participants. He also noted that Egypt is achieving food security and has attained increased fish protein supply. He expressed the wish for successful deliberations and officially declared the workshop opened.

The opening session was concluded by presentation from Dr. Mohamed Seisay on the background and objectives of the workshop. He informed the audience that the overall objective of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of women and youth along aquaculture value chain and in business development

Specifically, he noted that the workshop was aimed at:

- Broadening the horizon of African women and youth on the various fish farming systems, drawing on experiences and best practices from Egypt
- Enhancing aquaculture business planning
- Creating awareness among Africa women and youth on the crucial steps needed to upstage small-scale aquaculture into a viable business enterprise
- Impacting knowledge on improved fish trade and marketing and informal trade issues along African trade corridors
- Enhancing awareness and knowledge on environmental governance for sustainable aquaculture production
- Gaining first-hand experience and learn on managing fish farms in Egypt
IV. THE TECHNICAL SESSION

Setting the Scene Presentation
Setting the scene presentation heralded the commencement of the technical session:

i. Steps in value chain progression for African aquaculture by Mr. Etienne Hinrichsen

The technical presentations were organized into three broad thematic areas: Business development, Trade and marketing and production

Theme 1- Business Development
Under the business development, the following technical presentations were made:

i. Ten Best Business Practices for African Aquaculture by Mr. Etienne Hinrichsen, African Aquaculture Development Specialist

ii. AquaPreneurship and Business Model Canvas by Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda of Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources

iii. AquaFish Bankable Business Development and Financial Planning by Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda

iv. Policy issues and research priorities in aquaculture development – case study in Egypt by Prof. Gamal El Naggar

Theme 2- Fish Trade and Intra-Regional Trade
Under thematic area 2, the following technical presentations were made:

i. Improved Fish handling, processing and preservation techniques by Prof. Dr. Amira El-Hanafy

ii. Enhancing Intra-regional Fish Trade; constraints and what are the priority issues by Dr Phiri of Malawi College of Fisheries

iii. Importance of organization in fish marketing and trading- using cross border trading as an example by Ms Hellen Moepi, a PhD student at the University of the Western Cape

iv. Regional trade instruments (protocols and free trade agreements) - opportunities and challenges for aquaculture producers by Ms Hellen Moepi

Day 2:

Theme 3- Aquaculture Fish Production Systems and the Environmental challenges
Under fish production systems, the following presentations were:

i. Overview of aquaculture fish production systems in Africa and the benchmarks for progression to market-led development – case study in Egypt by Dr. Mohamed EL. Sayed Megahed
ii. Sustainability in aquaculture fish production in Egypt by Prof. Dr. Ayman Anwar Ammar
iii. Occurrence of fish diseases in different farming facilities and management methods; and what does the fish fillets tell us? By Prof. Adel Shaheen
iv. Environmental management in cage culture practices on the Volta Lake, Ghana by Dr. Ruby Asmah

Group work
Three working groups were formed focusing on (1) Aquaculture business development (2) Trade and marketing (3) Aquaculture production. These groups identified issues/constraints and recommended priority actions for:

i. Enhancing business development
ii. Competitive trade and marketing
iii. Increasing sustainable production and productivity in aquaculture systems

Presentations by the women and youth fish farmers, traders and processors

The group work provided participants an opportunity to share their experiences in their respective activities along aquaculture value chain from the AU member states present

Day 3:

FIELD VISIT

A field trip was undertaken to the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR) for lesson learning, and best practices along the aquaculture value chain. This field trip was hosted and facilitated by Prof. Dr. Amira El-Hanafy, Director of CLAR

V. MEETING OUTCOMES

The workshop strengthened capacity and enhanced awareness on best practices and lessons of the participants on the following:

i. Critical steps in successful in business development, with emphasis on aquaculture value chain
ii. Fish processing, preservation, fish trade and marketing,
iii. Aquaculture fish production systems, mainly from the perspectives of Egyptian aquaculture
iv. Biosecurity security and environmental issues in aquaculture production systems
v. Practical exposures to hatchery techniques, improved fish processing and value addition, fish diseases, simulating cage culture techniques on land; best management practices on private commercial fish farming systems etc

VI. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

i. It was noted that development of business plans among women and youth is still a major challenge during the initial stages of their business development. Therefore the following recommendations were made:
   a. Request for AU-IBAR to continue to train women and youth involved in Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in business plan development as well as how to conduct feasibility studies prior to development of their business plans
   b. AU-IBAR to develop a framework for the development of bankable business plans

ii. On capacity building among women and youth in areas of standards and certification process, customs and regulation, as well as access to technology, still remains a challenge.
   a. It was recommended that dedicated training be provided on standards/certification and safety measures, trade regulations, technology, environmental management, best practices and quality broodstock in aquaculture production and fish diseases for the women and youth within the SMEs
   b. Poor quality broodstock and a reduction of fingerlings production remains a challenge in the sector. It was therefore recommended that AU-IBAR assist in promoting breeding facilities and ensuring access to good quality broodstock
   c. Train fish famers on the artificial reproduction of fingerlings
   d. The participants learnt a lot on the use of natural products to feed fish in Egypt. It was recommended that fish farmers be exposed to the use of various natural products to feed fish in their country.

iii. Fish handling, hygiene and quality assurance are important steps in preserving the quality of the fish and enable traders to access better markets. The meeting recommended that women and youth involved in fisheries and aquaculture be trained on this aspect.

iv. The importance of women and youth organisation was recognised towards facilitating business growth and provides a support system and addresses issues of access to finance. This gives women and youth capacity to be strong as a group and have one voice on all issues affecting their businesses. Therefore the participants noted that:
   a. there is a need to encourage the creation of women and youth cooperatives at the national level for ease of access to finance and for sharing of information on inputs and market entry
requirements. It was recognised that there is a need for better organisation, to give women
capacity to operate as a group.

v. It was highlighted that policies on fish trade are not supporting small scale cross border fish
movement. It was recommended that a harmonised and coordinated policy be developed to
ensure more effective fish movement and access to markets between countries.

vi. Lastly it was recommended that AU-IBAR continues to engage women and youth in advocating
and lobbying them as social actors. This lobby must include interaction with other fishers to
improve governance and production, and to promote the sector for alternative livelihoods.

VII. WAY FORWARD

i. AU-IBAR to support recommended training programmes, policy brief development and
information generation and dissemination

ii. Strengthening of women and youth in aquaculture through Training of Trainers (ToT)

VIII. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

The closing ceremony included presentation of certificates of training to all the participants by the
Director of AU-IBAR and Director of CLAR.

On behalf of the Director of AU-IBAR, Dr Seisay thanked the Government and People of the
Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting this meeting. He expressed sincere appreciation for the
hospitality granted to the participants by the authorities in Egypt. He thanked the Experts of the
African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) for always supporting AU-IBAR in implementing its
activities. He especially thanked participants for honouring the AU-IBAR invitation and sharing of
their experiences and exchanging information on aquaculture and business development practices.
He expressed his appreciation to the participants for their active participation that contributed to
the success of the meetings.

The Director of Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR), Prof. Dr. Amira El-Hanafy
thanked AU-IBAR for organizing the training workshop in Cairo, Egypt and the selection of CLAR
to facilitate the practical sessions during the field trip. She noted that it was a deep sense of honour
to give recognition to the CLAR by the African Union, especially with regards to the selection of
CLAR as African Union centre of excellence for aquaculture. She officially closed the workshop
and wished all the participants a safe return to their various countries.