



Milestones

International legal instruments of relevance to women in fishing communities

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Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1948:

The Declaration calls for the promotion of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. These rights include the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment, the right to equal pay for equal work, as well as the right to rest and leisure. The UDHR also recognizes the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, the right to form and join trade unions, and the right to social security.

ILO C89 Night Work (Women) Convention, 1948:

The Convention prohibits the nighttime employment of women in industrial undertakings. The prohibition does not, however, apply to work involving perishable raw materials, which might include fish.

ILO C100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951:

The Convention affirms the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value. It also asks for measures to promote objective appraisal of jobs on the basis of work to be performed.

ILO C102 Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 :

The Convention aims to provide proposals with regard to minimum standards of social security. It defines the principal branches of social security: medical care, sickness benefit, unemployment benefit, old-age benefit, employment injury benefit, family benefit, maternity benefit, invalidity benefit and survivors' benefit. Ratifying the Convention requires the acceptance of at least three of these components.

ILO C111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958:

The Convention calls for a national policy to eliminate discrimination based on race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, in access to employment, equal opportunity, training and working conditions.

ILO C131 Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970: The Convention aims to provide protection for wage earners against unduly low wages, and to establish a system of minimum wages that covers all groups of wage earners whose terms of employment are such that coverage would be appropriate.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979: This landmark Convention calls for protecting women's rights, especially against discrimination at home or in the workplace. Also, it specifically protects the rights of rural women to participate in decision-making processes, to enjoy adequate living conditions, to benefit from social security and to access loans and credit.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992:

The Convention recognizes the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of

biological diversity and affirms the need for the full participation of women at all levels of policy-making and implementation for the conservation of biological diversity.

Agenda 21: The Programme of Action for Sustainable Development, 1991:

Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 highlights the need to formalize fishworkers' rights to participate in decision-making processes and the right of women to have equal opportunities with men in fisheries management. It also affirms the need for support to local fishing communities, indigenous people and women.

The United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, 1995:

Article 5 (i) requires States to take into account the interests of artisanal and subsistence fishers. Article 24. 2 (b) requires States to take into account the special requirements of developing states and, in particular, the need to avoid adverse impacts on and ensure access to, fisheries by subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fishers and women fishworkers, as well as indigenous people in developing States, particularly small island developing States, while adopting conservation and management measures for straddling and highly migratory fish stocks.

Beijing Platform for Action, 1995:

This agenda for women's empowerment aims at removing all obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. It seeks to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all women throughout their life cycle. It identifies twelve critical areas of concern, and priority actions for implementation.

ILO C177 Home Work Convention, 1996:

This Convention applies to all persons carrying on home-based work. It calls for the adoption, implementation and periodical review of a national policy on home work, aimed at improving the condition of such workers. It also calls for statutory social security protection, minimum age requirements, and maternity protection. The Convention is of specific relevance to those employed to engage in fish processing work from their homes.

ILO C183 Maternity Protection Convention, 2000:

The Convention applies to all employed women, including those in atypical forms of work. It calls for measures to protect the health of women workers, including maternity benefits.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 2000:

The MDGs have time bound targets, with clear indicators of progress, to meet eight agreed goals, including: reducing poverty, eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, reducing the maternal mortality ratio and halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. 