

ICSF Archives/Digital library

Women in fisheries form half the workforce in the sector and perform multidimensional roles. ICSF's *Yemaya*, a unique newsletter, has been in the forefront publishing regularly on women and gender issues in the fisheries sector. At a time when information overload causes crucial matters to be sidelined, *Yemaya* has provided much needed visibility to the challenges facing the women from fishing communities as well as their organisational efforts and initiatives in overcoming challenges.

All articles that have been published in *Yemaya* can be quickly searched by author or title or keyword in the ICSF Digital Library (www.icsfarchives.net). But it is not just *Yemaya* that is available here. ICSF's Archives/Digital library contains ICSF's collections of more than three decades, built up since ICSF's documentation centre was set up in Chennai in 1999 with the twin objectives of gathering all kinds of information pertinent to small-scale fisheries and making it available to all stakeholders in an easy and rapid-access format. Currently the digital archive has over two thousand original documents and more than 12,000 curated links.

The archive's papers are listed under the following major themes related to fisheries: Aquaculture, Biodiversity, Decent Work, Disasters and Climate Change (including COVID-19), Fisheries Trade, Gender in Fisheries and Aquaculture, Right to Resources (including access rights and tenure) and SSF Guidelines.

Sources for information and material are diverse and range from peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, conference reports, newsmagazines, websites and databases to governmental and multilateral agencies, fishery and fishworker organisations, non-governmental and civil society organisations and researchers. The issues addressed by the resources held in ICSF's archives are globally pertinent to ICSF's mandate, which includes women in fisheries.

The digital world is marked by information overload. This is why the Search function becomes important. The website's Search function is easy to use – for example, typing 'gender' in the search box throws up over 400 results which can be sorted by year, author or title. The list can be exported in 15 formats. While many of the documents may be available in the ICSF repository to be downloaded, in other cases, the link (url) to the document held elsewhere is provided. The search can be refined to provide greater focus. Thus, if you want a list of documents that have both 'gender' and 'justice' in the title, the refined search throws up a very specific list.

Another example: with many coastal communities being pushed towards tourism, how easy is the transition? Search and find the papers that talk about these issues in different parts of the world – Nigeria, the Philippines, Amazonia – and compare their findings! Further, if you search women and tourism, you find that papers have been written, but not many, indicating that this is an area that perhaps needs looking into.

Also offered is a special collection of 'grey' publications – important case studies and reports which include unpublished or out-of-print material relating to fishing communities, demands of fishworkers organisations, fisheries policy, and fisheries trade and so on; many of them not easily found outside the ICSF archive.

The collections are stored in both virtual 'soft' copies and in 'hard' print copies. The dissemination is in the form of soft copies to users. The digitisation is an ongoing process and new documents are added regularly to the database. All ICSF publications are available in the archives, including the triannual publications SAMUDRA Report and *Yemaya*, as well as monographs and dossiers, infographics and films pertinent to fisheries issues.

How would such an archive help fishworker organisations, especially women in fisheries? Information is power and access to the right information helps in articulating positions, perhaps finding answers too. The dynamic and interactive design of the digital archive makes it easy and hence attractive to use as it is accessible from anywhere in the world.

Visit the archive at www.icsfarchives.net 

What's New, Webby?



By **Ahana Lakshmi**
(ahanalakshmi@gmail.com), Independent Researcher, Chennai, India