

Navigating beyond gender in the maritime sector

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The concept of gender equality has been expanded beyond reference to women to include youth, people of different ethnicities and other marginalised groups. It is recognised internationally as essential to sustainable development, peace and prosperity. However, discriminatory practices persist across the world and the African maritime sector is no exception. Although robust legislation seeks to encourage greater diversity, more needs to be done to include these under-represented groups in a sector that is central to the economies of Africa's littoral states.

Key findings

- ▶ The maritime sector remains male-dominated and gender integration is absent from many African maritime security and governance frameworks and strategies.
- ▶ Gender initiatives within maritime operations focus mostly on women, with little attention paid to other marginalised groups.
- ▶ The fact that the maritime space has traditionally been dominated by men has resulted in harmful and persistent practices perpetuating gender inequality.
- ▶ The absence of adequate data makes it difficult to conduct a proper intersectional analysis within maritime operations.
- ▶ Understanding gender roles and disaggregating control and links to planning will allow for a more nuanced view of gender inequalities.
- ▶ Diverse strategies may be necessary to achieve equitable outcomes for different groups.
- ▶ Gender integration is still absent from the policy agendas and, where it is included, there is a lack of implementation and application.
- ▶ Most strategies and frameworks in Africa tend to equate gender equality with women's inclusion, grouping women as a homogenous group.
- ▶ Due to the fact that the maritime industry has been gender blind for so long, it will take time to make it at a minimum gender-responsive.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to African Union member states:

- ▶ Develop a maritime specific gender intersectional analysis framework. Firstly, apply a gender analysis, and secondly, take an intersectional approach toward gender to ensure that one gender is not monolithic or a homogenous group. Rather, there is a need to ensure that gender is understood as intersectional.
- ▶ Review maritime strategies, policies and programmes to ensure the language is gender sensitive. Policies and programmes should be at a minimum, gender-sensitive/responsive and take into account the specific needs and roles of all genders.
- ▶ Form partnerships with NGOs and international organisations. It is government's responsibility to mainstream gender and to ensure the private sector applies laws and policies. NGOs can help provide more tools and approaches to ensure policies and laws are not one-dimensional or unintentionally discriminate against other groups.
- ▶ Cooperation is needed at all levels from local communities to professional networks. Evidence suggests 'safety nets' in the form of cooperatives, professional networks or associations help women to overcome feelings of isolation in the male-dominated sector.

For the maritime industry:

- ▶ The industry should consider ways of promoting young people to senior positions, especially through mentorship programmes and specialised training courses.

Introduction

Gender equality, which is a fundamental human right, is recognised internationally as essential to sustainable development, peace and prosperity.¹ However, discriminatory practices persist across the world and are particularly acute in the maritime sector.

The fact that the maritime space has traditionally been dominated by men has resulted in harmful and persistent practices perpetuating gender inequality and preventing the meaningful participation of women. According to the International Transport Workers' Federation, women currently constitute only about 2% of the global maritime workforce.²

A previous research report by the Institute for Security Studies on Women in Africa's Maritime Space identified several push and pull factors that influence directly women's ability to participate in the industry.³

The nature and impact of these factors can be grouped in four broad categories – visibility, awareness, society and workplace. While this study focuses largely on the challenges women face in overcoming the odds stacked against them, young people and those from marginalised ethnic backgrounds are also disadvantaged.

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Gender alone does not structure and determine power relationships. Any discussion of gender must take into consideration the intersectionality of race, age, class and sexuality. As Grenshaw states, intersectionality provides a 'prism for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. All inequality is not created equal.'⁴

An intersectional approach to the maritime sector, which considers the inclusion of marginalised people and what their contribution to the sector can be, holds that the positions of different groups of people within it will be shaped by their experiences and will, in turn, shape their contribution.

Thus, the consideration of intersectionality is important to an understanding of the full scope of gender inequality within the African maritime space. Moreover, identifying lessons for overcoming gender discrimination will create an opportunity for greater discussion about eliminating negative gender practices.

Framework for gender analysis in the maritime sector

According to Abebe, gender can be understood as a set of socially-constructed norms and assumptions about 'tasks, functions and roles



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attributed to women and men in society and in public and private life'.⁵ These tasks and functions are learned, as opposed to innate, and inevitably vary across time and societies.

Gender analysis, the process of collecting, identifying, examining and analysing information on gender dynamics within specific contexts, examines the current situation, experiences and position of women, men, boys and girls and identifies the disparate effects on different gender identities.⁶

In particular, it assesses the differences in women's and men's lives, including those that lead to social and economic inequity, and applies this understanding to policy development.⁷ While it is important to understand men's issues, this report is about the lack of gender considerations in maritime sectors generally and the lack of application of an intersectional approach in particular.

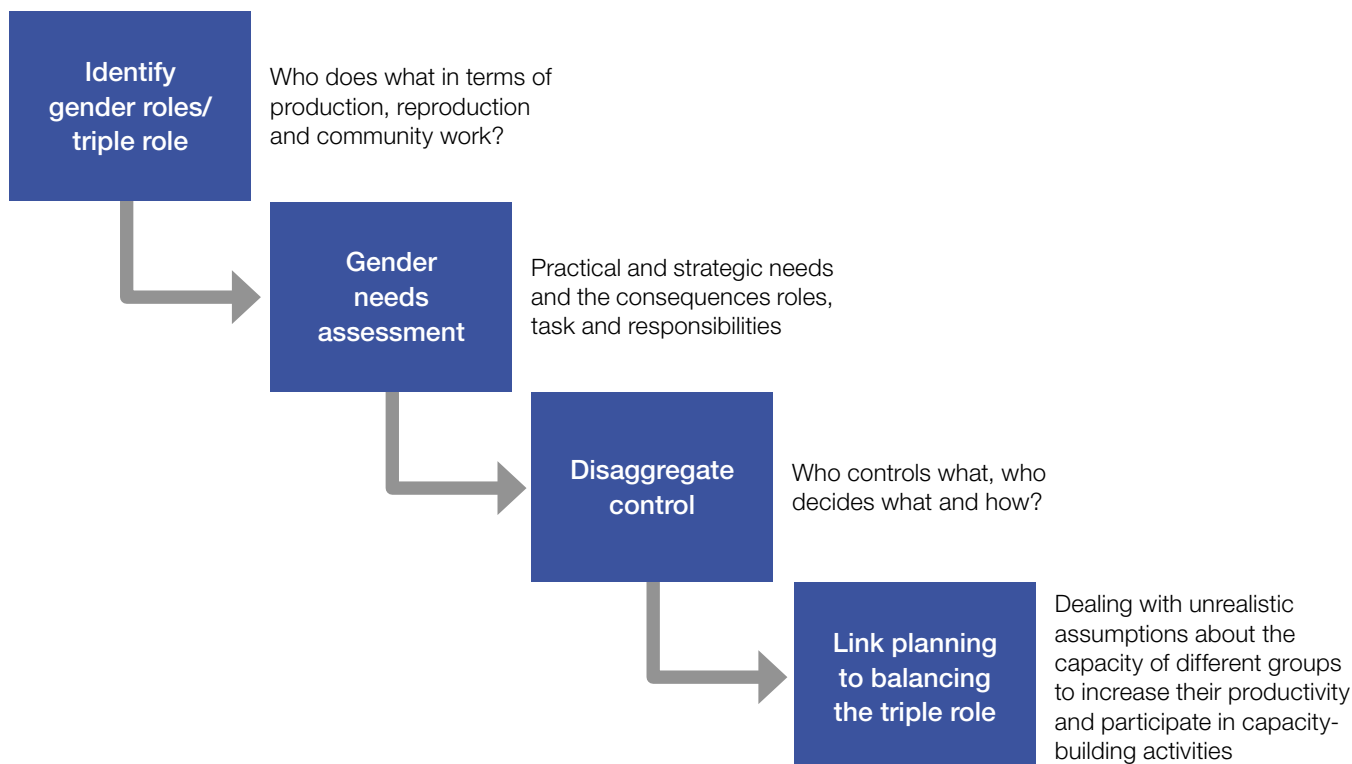
Gender is sometimes approached from the standpoint of women and the issues they face within different structures. Two factors influence the under-representation of women in the maritime sector. One is

the deeply-rooted gender biases that persist in a sector historically dominated by men. The other is the broader gender disparity brought about by harmful gender stereotypes and one's perceived character and position.

On average, women have less access to opportunities and resources than men and tend to encounter a more challenging work environment and a greater level of violence. As a result, emphasis is often placed on women and their empowerment. However, men also suffer from harmful gender stereotyping and a limited approach to gender equality at the workplace could neglect the transformative power of non-rigid gender roles.⁸

Different gender groups have different life experiences, needs, issues and priorities and these are also influenced by factors including gender identity, age, ethnicity, disability, education, income levels, employment status, marital status, sexual orientation and the presence of dependants. Thus, diverse strategies may be necessary to achieve equitable outcomes for different gender groups. The end result of a gender analysis is to create an environment in which gender does not affect either a group's opportunities or its responsibilities.

Chart 1: Moser Framework for gender analysis in the maritime sector¹¹



Source: Authors

The Moser Framework (Chart 1), which argues for an integrated gender-planning approach concentrated on gender power relations,¹⁰ is a suitable tool for analysing the maritime sector.¹¹ It can be used to look at issues of intersectionality and enables expansion of the gender elements to include race, age and class. It emphasises that gender planning is both a political and a technical process.

Maritime spaces, including security agencies, are experiencing gender imbalances, with incremental changes taking place in the representation of women, different races and young people.

Statistics reveal that:

- Only 2% of seafarers are women
- Only 22% of the port workforce are women
- Only 35% of land-based maritime workers are women
- 76% of women in land-based maritime professions work as administrators or in junior or professional level roles and
- Of the 10% of women in senior leadership positions most are likely to be chief financial officers.¹²

Similarly, women in the security sector tend to be in the minority and occupy supporting or administrative roles.¹³ In the fishing sector, while men tend to work primarily as fishers, it is largely women (85%) who process and sell the fish and most leadership and senior management positions in the industry are occupied by men.¹⁴

While men tend to work primarily as fishers, it is largely women who process and sell the fish

There are no such statistics for young people, people with disabilities or even race. These blind spots create a situation where addressing broader gender inequality issues will remain a challenge.

Much of the focus within the international maritime sector is on strategies to attract and retain women. However, as the Moser Framework indicates, a gender needs assessment is just one step towards understanding the lack of representation. Understanding gender roles,

disaggregating control, and links to planning will allow for a more nuanced view.

If structural inequalities in the sector are to be overcome it is necessary to understand the power dynamics at play. Empowerment, not only of women but of other marginalised groups, will require a nuanced analysis of power within the sector, especially in terms of who has the ability to exert that power over people and resources.¹⁵

In many African societies much of the focus on gender has been limited to the inclusion of women. The same can be said of the maritime space, where little attention is given to intersectionality beyond adding women and hoping to reach gender equality in the process.¹⁶ It would be useful to develop an industry-specific maritime gender intersectionality framework from the Moser Framework because this would provide an understanding of the division of labour and who controls what, and how, in the sector.

African maritime normative frameworks for development and peace

The maritime domain, which drives Africa's economy, is important for food security and food sovereignty.¹⁷ Countries on the continent have developed important regulatory frameworks to protect their maritime zones and encourage greater cooperation among both littoral and landlocked countries.

These efforts are clearly reflected in the African Union's (AU) maritime security instruments. Their main purpose is to deliver a holistic and unified understanding and vision among member states and to serve as guiding documents for maritime strategy and policy at both regional and national levels.

It is probable that any considerations, including gender, would be adopted and domesticated from these instruments. As noted below, gender integration is still largely absent from policy agendas and, where it is included, there is a lack of implementation and application.

Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS) 2050, the AU's primary instrument for dealing with maritime security and development issues, recognises the importance of gender equality and the need to address imbalances within the industry.¹⁸

The plan of action (Annex C) has as its objective the improvement of gender balance. The success or failure of the strategy will be measured by an increase in the number of women in the sector, with neither the strategy nor the plan of action providing for consideration of youth or other vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the deadline for this objective was set as 2015, but it is not clear what practical efforts were undertaken.

The African Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (the Lomé Charter), was envisaged as a progressive legal instrument that would pave the way for a broader discussion focused on further enhancing Africa-wide cooperation over maritime security and governance.¹⁹

It was also the first attempt to take the African maritime security agenda from non-binding instruments to a legally-binding agreement.²⁰ In particular, Article 16 of the document refers to women in the context of addressing human trafficking, in line with SDG 5 targets 1 and 2. The binding nature of the charter means states are legally obliged to develop appropriate migration policies in line with that article.²¹

The blue economy offers a real opportunity to improve gender balance and parity in the maritime sector

It was also envisaged that the charter would include annexures that would be developed over time and be incorporated at a later stage. The reason for the omission from the original document was that a number of AU Specialized Technical Committees could not provide their input in time for the adoption of the charter.

A number of annexures were drafted, with Annex II outlining gender-related provisions to ensure the equal participation of women and youth in decision-making processes.

Annex VI makes capacity-building for women a priority, encouraging cooperation across public and private institutions.²² As progressive as these regulatory initiatives are, the deadline for their adoption came and went in 2017 and the draft annexures have not yet been made public.

The delay also means that since the adoption of the charter in 2016 the document has not received sufficient ratifications to come into force and its future remains uncertain. In its current state the charter mentions gender only in terms of human resource capacity and lacks gender-sensitive language and a vision for gender mainstreaming.

Another important maritime instrument is the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter (RAMTC), which was envisaged as a way to promote cooperation and development within the maritime transport industries in Africa. Article 37 highlights the importance of gender balance and the participation of women, but provides little detail about what such gender balance will entail, nor does it extend the focus beyond women.

The charter advocates women's empowerment through education, mentoring and training, as well as gender equality through promotion of economic opportunities,²³ but largely ignores other groups. Furthermore, like the Lomé Charter, to date the RAMTC has failed to secure the required 15 ratifications needed for it to come into force.

Finally, the AU's Blue Economy Strategy (ABES) is another important document that aims to promote and encourage the development of a sustainable maritime economy among member states. It mentions the importance of ensuring inclusivity of women, youth and vulnerable people as part of blue governance and institutional change.²⁴

Thematic Area 1 (Annex 1), relating to fisheries and aquaculture, particularly emphasises women's and broader gender parity. Objective 5 of Goal 3 stresses the need to include women and youth in relevant fisheries policies and laws.²⁵

Actions suggested in this objective include the development of gender-sensitive and inclusive policies and legislation, collection of gender-disaggregated data and the prevention of gender-based violence. This is important because the blue economy offers a real opportunity to improve gender balance and parity in the maritime sector.²⁶

Most regulatory efforts to ensure a levelling of the African maritime space fail to take into consideration the intersectional barriers to greater inclusivity.

Chart 2: African Blue Economy Strategy, Annex 1, Objective 5, Goal 3²⁷

GOAL 3			
Ensuring sustainable social, economic, environmental and equitable outcomes and human rights whilst safeguarding natural capital and blue investment			
Objective 5			
Empower women and youth in fisheries and aquaculture in order to take full advantage for blue growth			
Target	Actions	Indicators and time frame	Coordinator and partnership
Inclusion of women and youth in relevant fisheries policies and laws	Review and develop gender sensitive and inclusive policies and legislation.	Number of policies reviewed and adopted (2020–2021)	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, CSOs, NGOs, women organisations, DEVP
Define empowerment criteria for actors	Establish criteria for preferential treatment for all actors (women and youths in particular) in providing services, and in instituting rights.	Report on criteria produced and approved (2022)	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP
Assess progress towards gender parity	Develop harmonised procedures and collect gender-disaggregated sector data, by age and occupational categories and use it to inform policy and programmes.	Number of tools for collecting gender-disaggregated data (2020)	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP
	Prioritise and develop financing and credit products/ services that target women and youth.	Number of financing products/ credit facilities that target women (2021)	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP
	Develop effective participation mechanisms and structures for women and youth in decision-making processes, design and implementation at all levels.	Number of structures/ mechanisms	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, CSOs, NGOs, women and youth organisations, DEVP
	Implement inter-sectoral approaches and partnerships for empowering women and youth.	From 2020 onwards	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP
	Develop and implement actions to prevent gender-based violence.	Report produced and approved (2020)	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP
	Monitor and report child labour in order to eliminate it.	From 2020 onwards	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP
	Re-skill the youths so that they can get decent youth employment.	From 2020 onwards	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP
	Develop new financial instruments to overcome hurdles of security guarantee requirements by the financial institutions.	From 2021 onwards	C: AU-AIBAR P: MS, DEVP

Source: AU-IBAR Africa Blue Economy Strategy, Annex 1

With the exception of Annex II of the Lomé Charter, which has neither been publicly shared nor adopted, most efforts are limited to a proclamation of gender equality through the inclusion of women.

The adage within gender research circles is that if you do not mention it, then you do not plan for it, nor do you budget for it. Thus, because these important documents do not even touch on how to mainstream gender in various implementation objectives the chances are that gender considerations will end up being ignored at worst, and at best be an add on to existing initiatives. This implies that there will be a clear gap in terms of practical outcomes.

It is evident, however, that the more recent instruments tend to pay more attention to the role of youth and other vulnerable groups (while still including women) under the auspices of gender equality, which is an encouraging trend. The recently adopted ABES is a good first step, setting the bar for future reviews of existing mechanisms and instruments.

Still, at present there is, among policymakers and even those involved in the maritime sector, either a lack or limited understanding of gender dynamics. A broader gender approach will provide for a system-wide perspective to mainstream all maritime policies, plans and programmes.

An understanding of the technical, political, and socio-cultural dimensions of gender mainstreaming could help address the gender-stereotypical norms and roles that persist in the maritime sector, reinforcing gender inequality.

Women’s initiatives in the African maritime space

There have been various initiatives to raise awareness of the role of women and other marginalised groups within the maritime space, although a lack of understanding of intersectionality means few of those fully integrate gender. The focus on women as a homogeneous group ignores ethnic, cultural and socio-economic complexities and may further exclude people who either could not participate or were not covered by these initiatives.

What is needed is that similar initiatives be established for a more intersectional approach. Some of these initiatives, like the WISTA, could be broadened to include young as well as ethnically marginalised women.

Lessons from Africa

Once an understanding is developed of the ways and means in which different gender groups engage in the maritime sector, a gender integration strategy can be

Chart 3: Examples of women’s initiatives in the African maritime sector

Governance	African Women in Maritime (WIMAFRICA).
Capacity-building	Network for Professional Women in the Maritime and Ports sectors of West and Central Africa.
Implementation support	Association for Women in the Maritime Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa (WOMESA).
Economic development and trade	Women’s International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA) has national associations in Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Angola and South Africa.
Other	L’Union des Sociétés Coopératives des Femmes de la Pêche et Assimilées de Côte d’Ivoire – a cooperative for women in fisheries in Côte d’Ivoire. ²⁸ Girls Go-To-Sea Campaign – a project of the Nigerian-based organisation Face Of Maritime International promoting women’s participation in the maritime sector. ²⁹ A joint project between WIMAfrica’s South Africa chapter and Global Fishing Watch aimed at developing women’s technical skills. ³⁰

Source: Authors

started. In mainstreaming gender within the maritime organisation attention should be paid to:

- The internal and external political processes, especially in terms of policies and guidelines
- The setting up of industry-specific mechanisms to incorporate gender issues in the design and implementation of policies and
- The development of appropriate tools and technical capabilities.

As easy as this looks on paper, the lack of practical examples of ways to implement these steps shows the difficulty of addressing gender inequality. Moreover, decision-makers within the maritime sector will have to recognise that there is, in fact, an issue of gender inequality.

As stated above, the maritime domain is largely understood to be male dominated, with harmful gender stereotypes creating a non-inclusive work environment. And it is also often understood as a sector that plays out largely at sea. Some jobs in the sector entail prolonged absence from home on board of a ship, which may affect some people's ability to fulfil their expected gender roles, for instance for those women who are mothers and wives.³¹ This report recognises that institutions have been blind to gender issues for so long that it will take time to make them, at a minimum, gender responsive.

What follows are examples of some practical steps that could be taken to address gender-inequality issues. This is not an exhaustive list, but focuses on salient issues identified as pertinent to a broader discussion of gender equality. They demonstrate that once analysis is undertaken interventions can actually meet their intended goals and they provide lessons for changing to a more intersectional approach.

Gender-sensitive fisheries and aquaculture

Fisheries and aquaculture contribute US\$24 billion (1.3%) to African economies and employ over 12 million people, while more than 3 billion people depend on coastal and marine resources.³²

Fisheries tend to have an employment multiplier effect on the continent, although this effect does not always have the same impact. For example, in Guinea, 3.15 on-

shore jobs are created for every fisherman's job, while in Mauritania that figure is only 1.04.³³

There is a clear gender divide when it comes to labour in the fishing sector, most prominently illustrated by the different roles assumed by men and women. Women are primarily responsible for selling the fish at the market, but their contribution to fisheries and fishing communities is considered part of their domestic work.³⁴

In 2014 women constituted about 27,3% of the workforce. While men do most of the fishing, 58% of the processing work is done by women, 4% by aquaculture workers and 3,6% by fishers.³⁵

The available data do not indicate the ages, class or race of these men and women. For instance, youths play a major role in the sector, while often having restricted access to resources and being more vulnerable to unemployment. For that reason it is unclear how gender interventions will affect these communities if a clearer intersectional approach to data collection is not developed for more targeted planning.

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Research suggests a major obstacle for women in the industry comes from gender biases at institutional level, with policies often overlooking the contribution of women, including their income generation role.³⁶ As a result, women are often underpaid and do not have the same access to capital and resources as men.³⁷ They often have to combine their post-harvest activities with reproductive and household duties. Consequently, many projects target this aspect in particular.

In Cabo Verde, the Coastal Fisheries Initiative was developed to integrate women's small-scale post-harvest production into the formal economy. This enabled women to develop better negotiating skills, helping them to negotiate directly with hotels and restaurants to set up a direct and short-supply chain.³⁸ Women were also empowered to bargain, access markets and improve their cold storage and the initiative took into consideration the daycare needs of their children.

Research suggests that participation in cooperatives with other women creates an important ‘safety net’ with regard to both physical security and access to finances and resources.³⁹ For instance, in Côte d’Ivoire women involved in artisanal fishing have formed l’Union des Sociétés Coopératives des Femmes de la Pêche et Assimilées de Côte d’Ivoire. The objective of this union of 16 cooperatives across the country is to improve the living and working conditions of its members.

Integrating women into the maritime sector is an important step towards addressing the discriminating practices that dominate the field. However, gender mainstreaming should move beyond thinking of women and consider the intersectionality of age, race and social status. For instance, statistics collected in the fishing sector offer limited information about sex disaggregation across the sector and often simply fail to capture any data on the participation of youth and children.⁴⁰

A report produced by UN Women in 2020 notes a number of African countries that have made progress in integrating gender into fisheries policies.⁴¹

For example, Mozambique is one of the few African countries that has developed a gender strategy targeting fisheries, while Seychelles provides special courses to improve the skills of women involved in the sector. However, many national policies and institutions are still not gender sensitive and often remain gender biased.

Furthermore, even when policies are in place, their implementation can be affected by a narrow understanding of gender. In South Africa the department of the Environment, Forestry and Fisheries has recently developed a small-scale fisheries policy that targets coastal communities, recognising women’s agency in this industry. But there has been considerable backlash against this seemingly progressive policy because it ignores the youth and other vulnerable groups.⁴²

Addressing gender inequality issues in the maritime sector is both a political and a policy problem that cannot be resolved without considering all factors beyond sex. A lack of data is a serious obstacle for appropriate policy-making.

Coastal zone management

Because of the lack of gender analysis the work and contribution of women and other vulnerable groups is often undocumented and undermined. The focus on the paid and formal activities of men dominates the majority of the discussions on management of coastal zones.

In Africa the interface between poverty and the environment is very important. Adverse climate changes disproportionately affect the poor. Thus, an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) plan must take into account the precarious situation of poor and vulnerable groups.

Coastal zones on the continent attract a high proportion of migrants seeking employment, many of them without homes

Coastal zones on the continent attract a high proportion of migrants seeking employment, many of them without homes or proper sanitation and facing the risk of conflict with host communities.⁴³

South Africa offers an example of a positive way of mitigating against these challenges. It has developed an ICZM plan explicitly focused on the poor and seeking to address inequalities and the rights of people to the coastline and its resources.⁴⁴

Many poor communities in South Africa are groups that were discriminated against during apartheid. The intersectional approach to addressing problems means that a broader group benefited from the intervention.

Intersectionality must be taken into consideration in understanding how resources are being allocated and what that means for economic opportunities in coastal development. This also means understanding gender power dynamics between locals and migrant workers to address potential future conflicts.

Leadership in the maritime industry

Specific issues in the maritime sector make success in the field particularly hard for women. The issues include challenges related to the workplace environment and to the lack of a critical mass of women in this sector.⁴⁵

While marine schools and other educational programmes offer an array of leadership courses and the maritime industry recognises the importance of leadership skills, women tend to work in junior and administrative roles rather than in management or leadership positions.⁴⁶ When they do achieve leadership positions they frequently find they have to work far harder than their male colleagues to live up to disproportionate expectations.⁴⁷

Leadership styles vary, not only between men and women but between individuals within those gender groups. Some have a more collaborative approach than others.

A common belief within the maritime space is that women are not authoritative enough.⁴⁸ Once they are at sea it is assumed they cannot lead crews. Young people, too, are poorly represented in senior positions, most of which are headed by former ships captains who have had a considerable number of years at sea.

The industry should consider ways of promoting young people to senior positions, especially through mentorship programmes and specialised training courses.

WOMESA, a regional non-governmental organisation (NGO), advocates gender equity in the East and Southern African maritime sector, lobbying for an increase in the percentage of women at the senior management level.⁴⁹ WOMESA has previously worked closely with the International Maritime Organisation to build the capacity of women and advance them to managerial level through training, fellowships and exchange programmes.

A common belief within the maritime space is that women are not authoritative enough – it is assumed they cannot lead crews at sea

Similar efforts are undertaken by WIMAfrica, an NGO that brings together African maritime women's associations and female maritime leaders across the continent. WIMAfrica organises continental conferences on empowering and supporting young women in leadership positions and promoting an inclusive environment in the sector.⁵⁰

A problem often reported by women in the maritime sector, especially those working on board vessels, is the feeling of isolation and exclusion.⁵¹ In that regard professional networks and associations offer a safety net in terms of mentorship, information and psychological support.

Policy plays a key role in ensuring that there is the political will to consider the need for women to hold leadership positions. Women in South Africa, Kenya and the Seychelles were encouraged, through professional development courses, to assume managerial positions. Retention in these countries was ensured by in-house support systems such as flexible working hours.⁵²



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Conclusion

Most interventions in Africa that are labelled gender empowerment focus only on women and should be called women empowerment programmes or strategies.

The few examples demonstrate that understanding the context and developing processes that address problems that are identified is one way of solving them and that a more holistic approach is needed both by national governments and the industry in general.

A proper intersectional gender analysis cannot be conducted until information is gathered about all the other elements (age, class, race, sexuality). And there can be no policy planning until that information is collected and analysed.

Recommendations

Develop a maritime specific gender intersectional analysis framework

The fact that very few gender programmes within the maritime sector include any groups other than women could speak to a lack of gender analysis. Issues of leadership do not relate only to a lack of representation of women but also to that of young people and marginalised races and classes.

An industry-specific tool should be developed to deal with this issue. The Moser Framework can be used to guide research questions, but the tools for collecting intersectional data should be maritime specific. The first move would be to apply a gender analysis, the second to take an intersectional approach to gender, ensuring that it is understood as intersecting with other important power structures and developing targeted interventions and approaches to gender equality.

Review policies and programmes to ensure the language is gender sensitive

Most policies that drive maritime development and security at continental and national levels are not gender sensitive. Thus, it is unrealistic to expect them to be gender transformative. Policies and programmes should be directed at the specific needs and roles of all genders. A gender audit of continental and sub-regional policies and strategies should be conducted to make the frameworks more gender sensitive.

Form partnerships with NGOs and international organisations

National governments alone cannot address the structural barriers to lack of gender mainstreaming in the sector. NGOs can provide more tools and approaches to ensure that policies and laws are not one dimensional and unintentionally discriminate against other groups. WOMESA or WIMAfrica could lend their technical skills to government and the private sector to help them increase their own knowledge and capacity to mainstream gender considerations.

Cooperate at all levels from local communities to professional networks

Evidence suggests that 'safety nets' in the form of cooperatives, professional networks or associations help women to overcome feelings of isolation in male-dominated sectors. Governments must encourage and support the formation of such organisations, especially at a communal level. This could help increase the collection of gender-sensitive data across the sector. Supporting associations and organisations might help close this gap while also offering opportunities to understand the diversity of the contributors to the sector, which could help move the focus from women's empowerment alone in order to achieve actual gender equality.

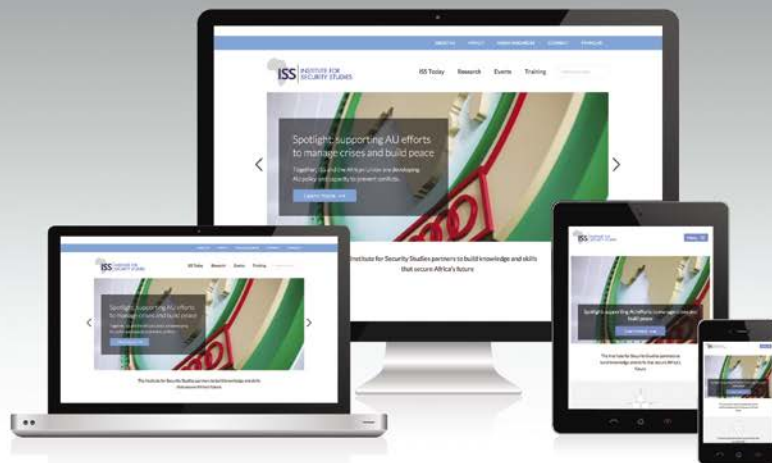
Notes

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