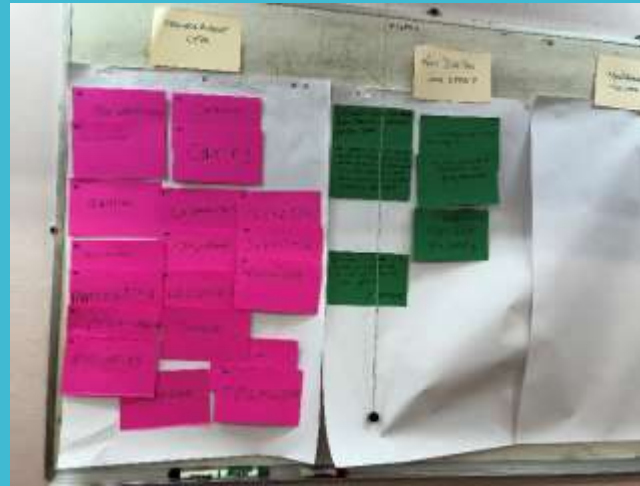


# How has organization benefited women in the Barbados flyingfish fishery? A look from within



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## Context & background:

### The GIFT



- Persistent data and knowledge gaps on gender in SSF
- Gender characteristics are poorly documented
- ***Many assumptions but few real facts***
- UWI-CERMES and partners want to better understand gender in SSFs
- A Gender in Fisheries Team (GIFT) was formed in 2016
  - ***Focus:*** gender in SSFs
  - ***Scope:*** SSF fisheries value chains & governance arrangements with concentration on livelihoods and governance institutions

Within the SSF Guidelines our focus is on the section *Responsible fisheries and sustainable development*, sub-section 8 on *Gender equality*

## Context & background:

### Central Fish Processors Association (CFPA)



Established in 2005 to address challenges small-scale processors (vendors) were having with their work area  
The only fisheries postharvest association in Barbados  
Predominantly female, with female-led since inception



# Collective Action & Women in Fisherfolk Organizations



- ***Collective action*** occurs in the fisheries sector to:
  - Defend shared interests
  - Secure rights and benefits for the industry
  - Catch or sell fish
- Frequent globally, more so than in Barbados
- Women are scarce in fisherfolk organizations globally
- The Central Fish Processors Association (CFPA) offers a unique case
  - Organization that is primarily female and female-led
- GIFT is pleased to be working with the CFPA on research into women's participation in fisherfolk organizations

# Research methods

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FAO/C1169 (E-)

FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular

2018 5075-6/18

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP IN FISHERFOLK ORGANIZATIONS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION IN FISHERIES  
A review of evidence on enablers, drivers and barriers



## HOW HAS ORGANIZATION BENEFITED WOMEN IN THE BARBADOS FLYINGFISH FISHERY? A LOOK FROM WITHIN

Collective action ("people joining together purposely for a shared cause") occurs in the fisheries sector (more so globally than in Barbados) to defend shared interests, to secure rights and benefits for the industry, or simply to catch or sell fish. Women are scarce in fisherfolk organizations globally. The Central Fish Processors Association (CFPA) offers a unique case of an organization that is primarily female and female-led. The Gender in Fisheries Team (GIFT) at UWI is pleased to be working with the CFPA on research into women's participation in fisherfolk organizations. Through this group session, we aim to understand better the benefits to you from participation in the CFPA and the challenges you face in your livelihoods and domestic life generally.

In an interactive group setting, you will be asked to provide responses to the following key questions. You will put your individual replies on coloured card so we can all see and discuss similarities, differences and patterns.

1. Choose 5-words to describe how you feel about the CFPA (from personal and/or livelihood perspective, organization functionality etc.). Feel free to add any words that may not be on the list.  
(Provide coloured card for persons to write on. Collect, sort and discuss)

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Fun           | 11. Family       |
| 2. Challenging   | 12. Professional |
| 3. Friendly      | 13. Busy         |
| 4. Engaging      | 14. Fast-paced   |
| 5. Rewarding     | 15. Innovative   |
| 6. Collaborative | 16. Teamwork     |
| 7. Flexible      | 17. Motivating   |
| 8. Supportive    | 18. Positive     |
| 9. Exciting      | 19. Comfortable  |
| 10. Caring       | 20. Integrity    |

Source: <https://www.quantumworkplace.com/future-of-work/20-words-that-describe-the-best-workplaces>

2. Why did you join the CFPA? Describe in 3-5 words  
(Provide coloured card for persons to write on. Collect, sort and discuss) (motivations)
3. How has being a member of the CFPA benefited you?  
(Provide coloured card for persons to write on. Collect, sort and discuss)  
(organizational incentives to induce commitments from members)

There are different levels at which collective action could have an impact:

- Economic – link to clients, improved bargaining power, improving the value chain, improved processing efficiency because of better access to productive inputs (equipment, storage, dedicated processing location), ensured shared distribution of income in the flyingfish sector

1

9 guiding questions



Small group interactive session



Anonymous individual contributions

This research was inspired by this 2018 FAO publication

## Results:

### Feelings about the CFPA

- Personal
- Livelihood
- Functionality

- Pick list of 20 words (all positive)
  - Best describe their feelings about the CFPA
- Each participant asked to choose 3 words
- Option to provide additional words
- 40% of original pick list words chosen
  - **Motivating** most frequently chosen (21%)
- 5 additional words added (all negative)
  - **dysfunctional, division, partial, disharmonized, frustrated** (5% each)
- Frequency of +ve to –ve words: 74% to 26%

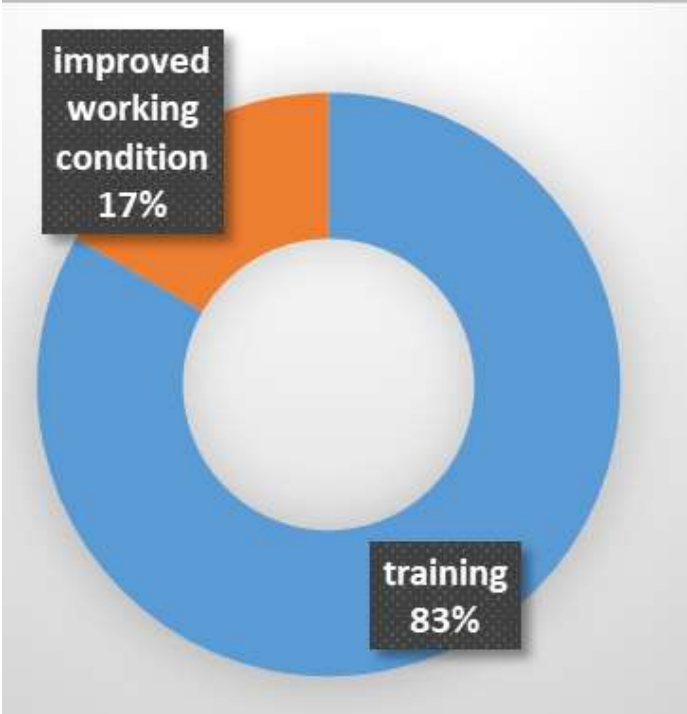


Results:  
Reasons for joining the CFPA & membership benefits

Reasons for joining

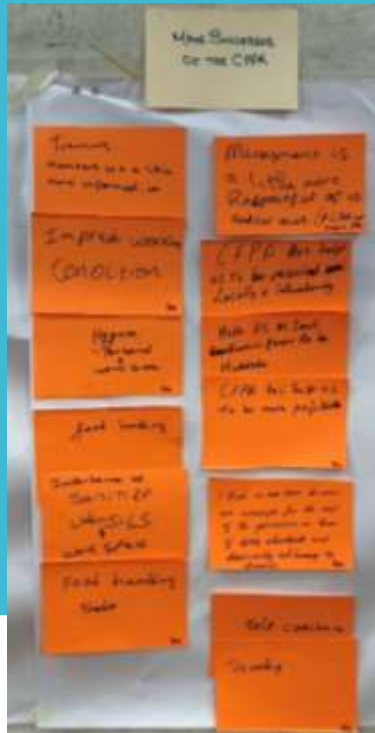
- 1 reason per individual.
- 83% joined for: **representation for better working conditions and defending their rights in the market**
- Feeling of being under threat of losing their working spaces.
  - unfair management practices
- A dedicated working area has made their jobs more efficient.

Benefits of membership





## Results: Perceived successes of the CFPA



- CFPA successes categorized as benefits to the:
  - Group
  - Individual
- Collective benefits include:
  - Improved working conditions
  - Implementation and adherence to food handling standards (31%)
  - Improved profitability & marketability as small business persons
  - Local & international recognition
  - Increased respect, “a little, not much,” from management
  - More informed members (through trainings)
- Personal benefits:
  - Improved self-confidence
  - Rewarding experience

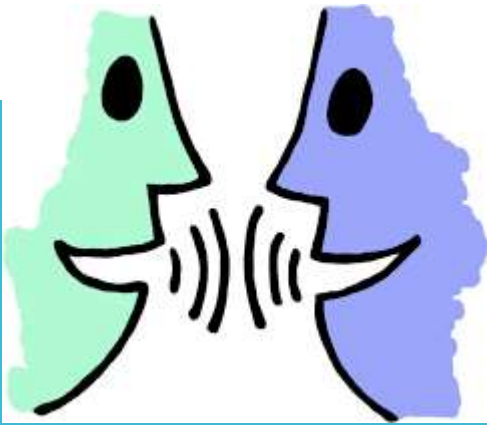
## Problems



### Results: CFPA problems & solutions

- Limited/poor communication (33.3%)
  - President to members
- Inclination to form cliques (26.6%)
  - Bias towards and exclusion of some
  - Some in the “know-how” and others that are the “need-to-show-up-to-know”
  - “We feel shut out”
- Lack of office + storage space (13.3%)
  - Not enough space to store scales and equipment
  - Thought to impact communication issue
- Pettiness, non-functionality, people not caring anymore and work threats (6.6% each)

## Solutions



### Results: CFPA problems & solutions



- Improve information exchange and communication! (40%)
- Improve member engagement and sense of belonging (20%)
- Hold meetings to revitalize CFPA (10%)
  - “get it functioning again!”
- Lobby (again) for a space for storage (and meetings) (10%)
- Create a sense of teamwork (10%)
- Foster objectivity among members (10%)
  - Do not allow personal feelings to sabotage collective action

## Vision elements

### Results: Vision for the CFPA

- Being innovative
- Greater impact/recognition in the industry
- Main negotiator for local fisherfolk
- Providing financial and social assistance & benefits for members
- Group working together
- More trust in each other
- Increased membership
- Better communication
- Organized and fully functioning organization



### PRIORITIES

- 1.
- 2.

**Financial benefits**  
**Recognition for respect**



Results:  
**Respect from  
men in the  
fisheries  
industry**



- Membership does not bring about respect, it is inherent
- "Men respect women because they know we work hard"
- But...resentment could be mistaken for respect
  - CFPA is recognized as the driving force at the Bridgetown Fisheries Complex
  - CFPA members are told, "they listen to wanna [you all] down there"
  - Seems like respect but could be resentment because "we get things done"

## Results: Some key learning



- The CFPA functions well with day-to-day problem solving
- But overall governance is challenged by what members perceive as *inter alia*:
  - **top-down decision-making,**
  - **lack of transparency,**
  - **an inclination to form cliques and isolate others, and,**
  - **infrequent top-down communication**
- Members clearly believe in the value of the CFPA within the postharvest sector of the flyingfish fishery
- The underlying frustration regarding these governance issues needs to be addressed and warrants further investigation
- A 'business as usual' approach could result in further loss of members due to division and frustration
- Solutions can be simple, practical and come from within

# NOW WHAT ?

## Results: Next steps

- Hold additional meetings with more CFPA members
  - To further understand and document perceptions of and attitudes to the organization
- Widen the research to cover aspects of:
  - Individual agency
  - Individual rivalries and contrasting interests
  - Convergences and coincidences
  - Identifying ways in which the CFPA can better benefit livelihoods and domestic life
- Conduct the same research with the CFPA president for comparison
- Validate and share results with all CFPA members
- Work with CFPA members to strengthen the organization