

## Unwanted

Most fishing operators and owners do not allow women to go on-board their commercial fishing vessels. This is due to the nature of the job on-board the vessel. Hence, they see women as hindrance in the fishing operation.

On a visit to the Navotas Fish Port Complex last February to do some works on the identification of a large commercial fishing vessel using purse seine to be assessed by fish observers for our project on fisheries post-harvest losses, we learned that women on-board is a big no-no.

Anecdotal reports indicate that women have long been “unwanted” in sea fishing due to cultural and social reasons. Cultural reasons is linked to the attitude of men or husbands towards women or their wives which is usually associated to traditional family roles. Men can be away from home for long periods of time while women cannot as they are expected to do traditional women-related roles such as taking care of children, cooking, doing laundry work and many more. Despite these limitations, women are visible in the pre- and post-fishing activities, such as preparation of nets in the case of small-scale fishing, to processing and marketing of the catch.

Needless to say, the dangerous nature of fishing is the major reason that restrains operators and owners from employing women. Examples of the danger include bad weather, the condition of the sea, and accidents that may happen most especially if the vessel is in poor condition. Then, there’s the stereotyping of men as being physically stronger than women and can move faster than women (especially in setting and hauling of gears).

Thus, unless we apply a gender lens on how women can engage in activities on-board fishing vessels, fishing on-board will remain as a man’s world and women will always be “unwanted.”

Perhaps, modernization in fishing and the use of modern technologies could be one of the keys for achieving the dream of women being “wanted” on-board commercial fishing vessels. **(RABassig)**

## NFRDI Celebrated NWM 2020

This year’s celebration of the National Women’s Month (NWM) might be the most memorable for NFRDI since a lot of its scheduled activities for NWM were cancelled. This is due to the implementation of the enhanced community quarantine relative to COVID-19 on March 16, 2020.

However, amidst the threat of the pandemic COVID-19, the Institute’s employees managed to show the spirit of the event by donning purple outfit every Fridays - one of the suggested activities by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW).

Though this year’s celebration was put into a halt, it was inspiring to note that employees’ support and awareness of the advocacy is still alive as seen in their participation in Purple Fridays and in their committed submissions of GAD-related articles. **(NCGatdula)**



Photo courtesy of Ms. Cleng Fernandez

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# G Ra D

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