A group of approximately ten people, including men and women, are seated in a circle on pink plastic chairs in a room with walls covered in graffiti. They appear to be in a meeting or discussion. One woman on the left is holding a book or document. The room has a window in the background showing some greenery outside.

# An investigation of women participation in fish value chains and value chain governance in Malawi: A case of Msaka on Lake Malawi and Kachulu on Lake Chilwa

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Gender as a new Frontier in fisheries and Aquaculture 2016 IIFET

Aberdeen University Scotland

# Presentation outline

- Introduction
- Research problem
- Methodology
- Conceptual framework
- Findings
- Discussion
- Policy implications
- Conclusions
- Acknowledgements

# Introduction & context

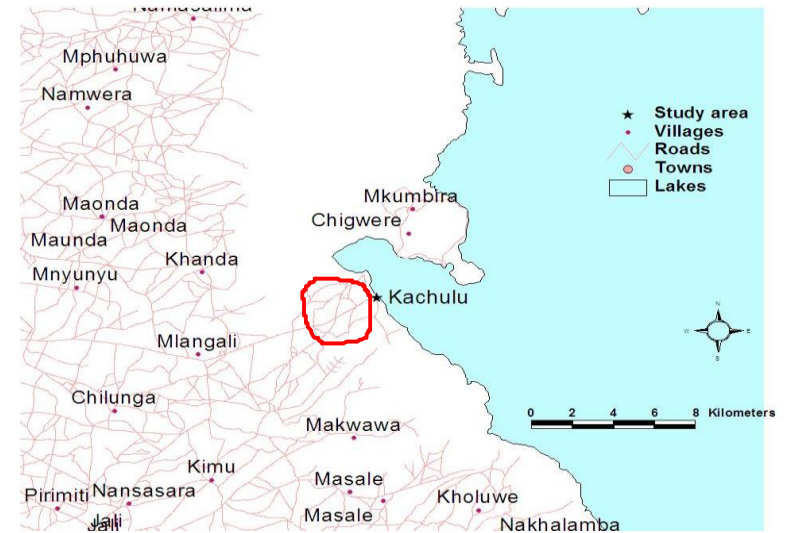
- Women's contribution in value chain activities is underestimated
- Decision-making processes undervalues women's economic and social contribution in the value chain
- Limited information on women involvement in fish value chains and their governance in Malawi.

# Research objectives

- Investigate and document women's' involvement in value chain activities and their governance
- Identify the factors that influence/hamper women' s participation in fish value chain
- Contribute to knowledge and literature on fish value chains and their governance from a gender perspective
- Hopefully contribute to gendered policy reforms

# Methodology

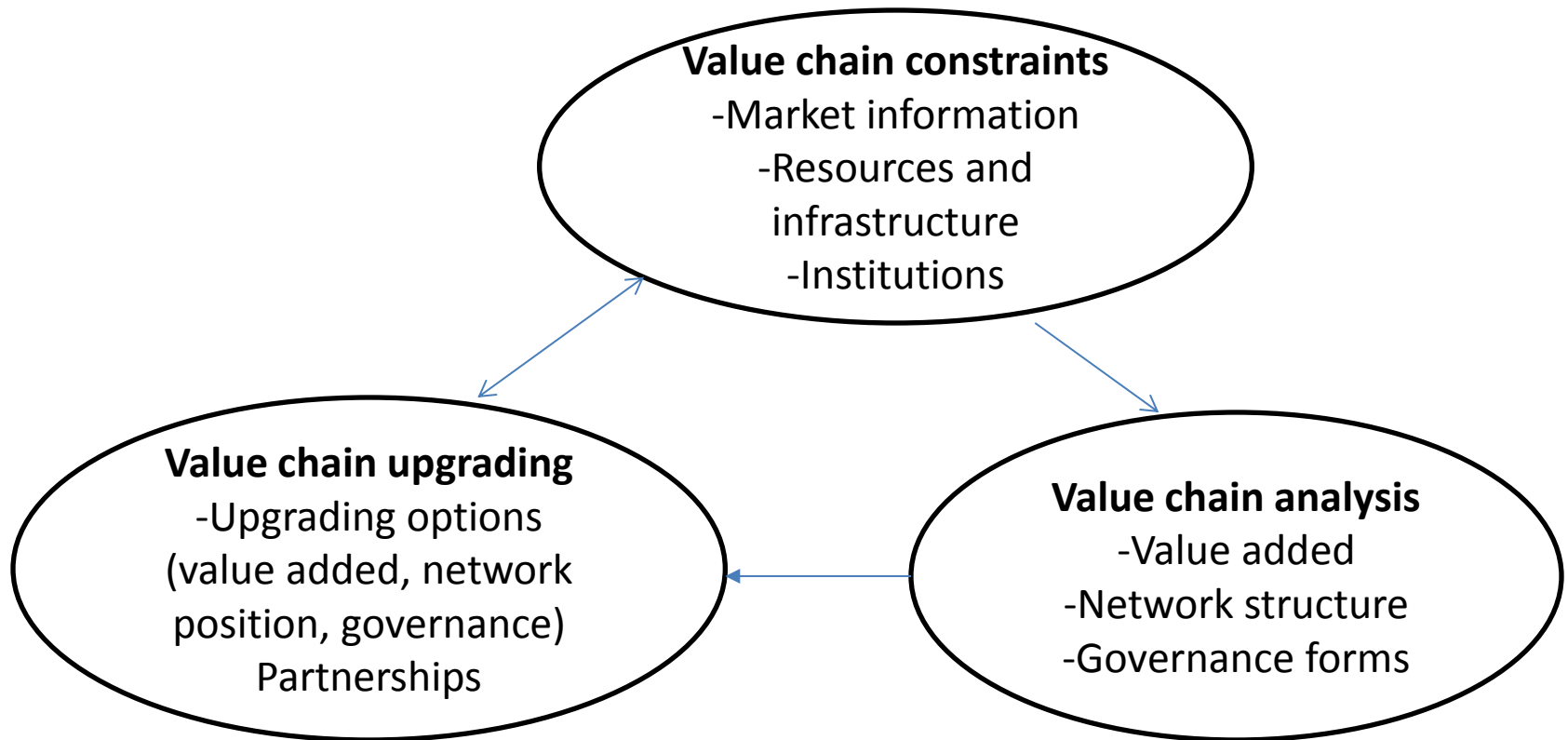
- Two groups (about 20 each) of women at two landing sites (Kachulu & Msaka) have been identified and formed as the focus groups for this PhD study.
- A number of men have been included in each group as ‘control’
- In the last three months, a preliminary investigation of the women’s involvement in value chains of *Engaulicypris sadella* (*Usipa*) and *Barbus palodinosus* species (*Matemba*) was undertaken



# Methodology continued...

- Techniques and approaches used:
  - ❑ Value chain & value chain governance (literature review)
  - ❑ Value chain mapping (routes and modalities being used to get fish from landing sites to retail markets)
  - ❑ Costs and revenues at each of the main nodes identified
  - ❑ I am using Focus Group discussions, Key informants and journals records

# Conceptual framework



**Global value chain analysis framework (Trienekens, 2011)**

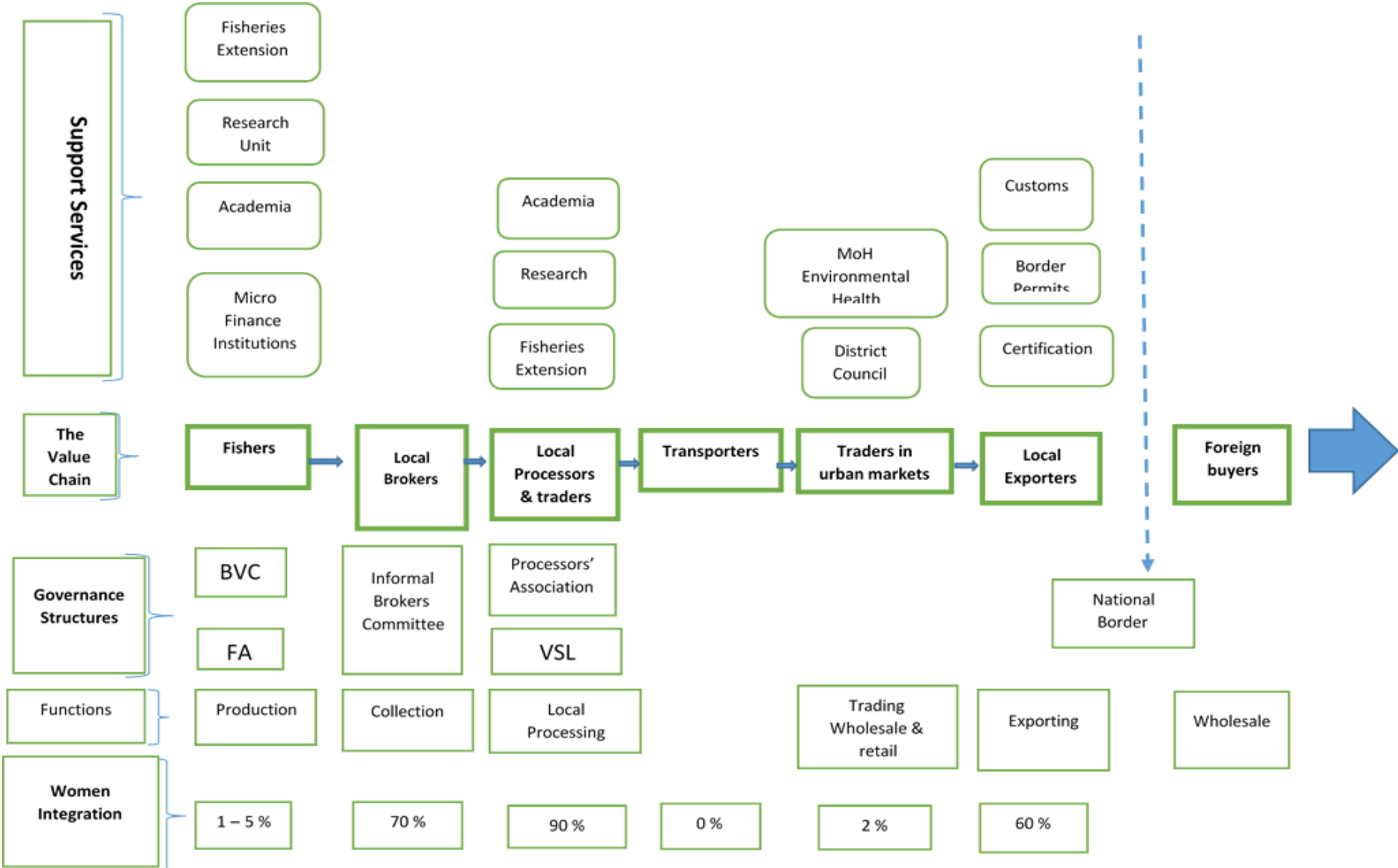


# Findings

- **Value chain nodes and actors**
  - **Five nodes identified**
  - Production, collection, processing, trading (wholesale and retail) exporting
  
  - **Seven major actors identified**
  - Fishers, Auxiliary actor (*macheucheu*), Processors, Traders, Processor/traders, Transporters, Wholesalers, Retailers



# Value chain structure



# Value chain structure & activities

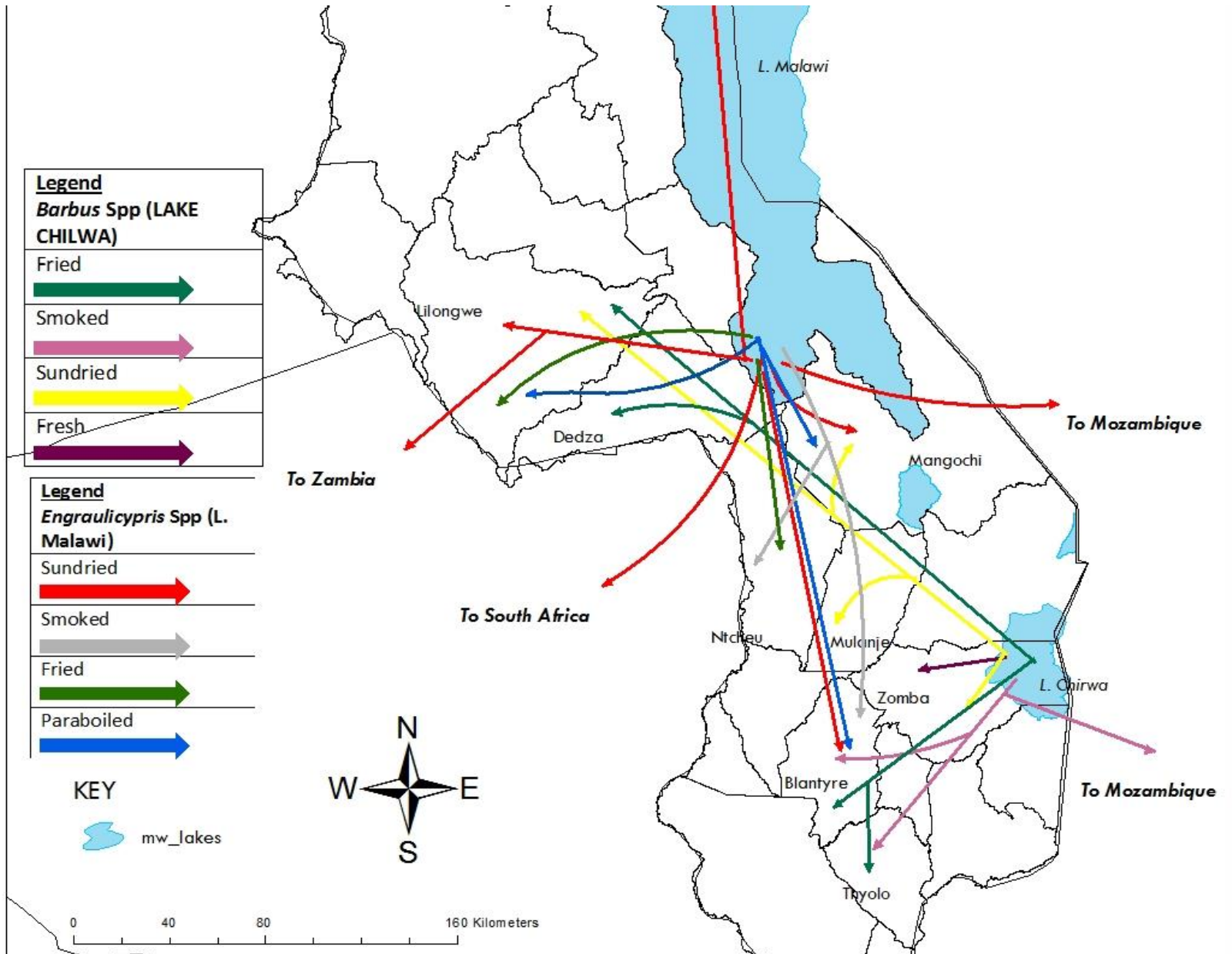
- Catching sector is artisanal characterized by non-selective fishing gears
- Fishers sell most of the catch, but keep some for family and crew members
- Fish is sold to processors or Processor traders (use buckets or basins).
- Prices range between MK3,500 (US\$ 4.66) and MK6,500 (US\$ 8.78) depending supply & demand (catch levels and seasonality)
- Fish is sun dried; para-boiled & sun dried; fried & sun dried
- It is then transported to different markets using bicycles, buses and pick-ups

# Value chain actors cont' d

- Auxiliary actors exists (locally known as *Macheucheu* at Kachulu & *Jolova* at Msaka)
  - ❑ They facilitate trade between fishers and processors at the beach for a fee (e.g. for K3500 tin of fish , a processor pays K3700. The R200 goes to the Macheucheu/Jolova)
  - ❑ role usually played by divorced or widowed women who usually do not have enough capital to go into processing or other businesses.
  - ❑ get power for the role from being local and sympathized by community



# Fish flows from Kachulu & Msaka to various Markets



# **Gender differentiated value chain roles and power relations**

- men and women processors/traders spend an equal amount of time (approximately 8 hours per day) on fish processing and trading
- 46 % of the women and 22 % of the men were engaged in other economic activities to make ends meet

# Gender differentiated value chain roles and power

Value chain activity	Gender roles	Power relations
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both men and women are involved at catching level</li> <li>• Men as gear owners &amp; crew, women as gear owners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women gear owners employ men as crew members</li> <li>• Crew members make operational decisions (e.g. where to go fishing)</li> </ul>
Collection (auxiliary actors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80% of the actors are women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• power lies in that they are local (from within the community) ~ allowed to broker the trade and have bargaining power with fishers</li> </ul>
Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both men and women involved, but women dominate (over 70% are women)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing number of women receiving technical support, thus have power to control who has access to the solar drying facilities at Kachulu.</li> </ul>
Trading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both men and women with women dominating including export</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Married women seek permission from the husbands to travel</li> <li>• Women from Msaka have power to withhold the money as men and women have different spending patterns</li> <li>• Women tend to economise the money</li> </ul>

# Extent of women involvement d in governance

- Value chain governance; relationships that operate within or influence the range of activities required to bring a product or service from inception to consumers & the institutional mechanisms through which non-market coordination of chain activities takes place
- **Relational**
  - whereby the auxiliary actor ‘*macheucheu*’ are allowed to transact between fishers and processors
  - Fishermen in Msaka prioritise their wives for sale of fish in case of shortage of catches
- **Market**
  - marketing is highly informal and transactions are relatively simple.
  - information on demand and product specifications for specific markets is easily transmitted through mobile phones
  - processing of fish is done with no input from buyers.



# Governance cont' d

- **Membership in Associations**

- In BVCs and Fisheries Associations women representation is below 10%

- lower representation often make it difficult for them to influence key decisions.

- **Intermediary node**

- Women have self-organized groups

- **Fish processing associations**

- facilitated by the different projects being implemented by different partners

# Governance cont' d

- **Fish product standards**
  - fish products from both Kachulu and Msaka beaches are not subjected to quality control



# Discussion and conclusions

- Women tend to be well integrated in most of the value chain nodes at the two study sites as participation requires limited financial resources and business skills
- Women tend to be dominant at the processing nodes, probably because this node involves preparing the fish for processing including washing, sun drying, smoking and para-boiling (a reflection of cultural stereotypes on gender roles?)

# Discussion & conclusions cont' d

- Governance patterns and interactions are based on spacial proximity, family and ethnic ties (e.g. auxiliary actors '*macheucheu*' are allowed to facilitate trade between fishers and processors & fishermen in Msaka prioritise their wives for sale of fish)
- Prioritisation of auxiliary actors and wives plays a crucial role in that it contributes to well-being of women and their families
- With respect to marketing, the governance mechanism is price whereby processors/traders inform each other of markets which offer better prices for particular products

# Discussion & conclusions cont' d

- Standards are voluntary and awareness of these has not been brought to the attention of the various value chain actors
- The lack of minimum universally acceptable product standards does not appear to be affecting the export of fish products to neighbouring countries, though this could change in future

# Policy implications

- Need to establish fish collection/processing/trading organizations as entry points for capacity building.
- Improve the conditions and advancement of the auxiliary actors who are currently not targeted for any interventions
- Evidence is emerging for coherent national and international policy on minimum product standards as part of promoting intra-regional fish trade
- Need for debates and discourse on acknowledging, recognising and improving the role women in fish values chains in Malawi and SADC

# Acknowledgements

- World Fish Centre EU funded Fish Trade Programme is funding this study
- Thanks to respondents for providing valuable information
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Thanks for you  
attention

Contributions are welcome!!!!!!!!!!!!