

Social Development in Small-Scale Fisheries: Primary Findings from Eight Case Studies

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What is social development in the context of fishing communities?

- Transforming institutions to empower fishing communities, fishers and fishworkers by advancing human rights, social and economic equality and inclusion to bring about overall wellbeing
- Brings special attention to the poor and disadvantaged, including the vulnerable and marginalized in fishing communities
- Social development can be community-led or State-led, or a combination, and coordinated under an “institutional approach”

Social security and social protection

- Extending social security benefits to small-scale and artisanal fishers and fishworkers (child and family benefits, maternity protection, unemployment support, employment injury benefits, sickness benefits, health protection (medical care), old age benefits and invalidity/disability benefits)
- Social protection covers a broad range of services in addition to “social security” and include: protection provided between family members, between members of a local community, and measures addressed to the poorest, most vulnerable or marginalized members of society

Occupational health, forced labour

- Adopting legislation to deal with occupational safety and health issues and unfair working conditions of small-scale fishers and fishworkers; integrating occupational safety and health into fisheries management
- Eradicating forced labour in fisheries, including small-scale fisheries (forced labour refers to a situation where work or service is exacted from people under the menace of any penalty, and for which they have not offered themselves voluntarily (ILO))

Investing in social development

- Investing, creating and providing access to:
 - Food, clothing, housing, sanitation, health services, drinking water and energy
 - Education, literacy and digital inclusion
 - Saving, credit and insurance
- Ensuring access to justice (environmental, social, and economic)
- Improving sea safety and disaster management
- protecting access to customary fishing grounds
- Providing decent work opportunities

Achieving social development

- Adhering to national, regional and international human rights standards
- Encouraging conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources
- Adopting inclusive, non-discriminatory and sound economic policies
- Promoting alternative income generating opportunities
- Providing an environment free from crime, including from organized crime, violence, piracy, theft, sexual abuse, corruption and abuse of authority
- Respecting coordinated migration of fishers across national boundaries

Social well-being and social development

- Duty to create the enabling conditions of social development goes beyond the mandate of fisheries authorities or the capacities of fishing community collectives
- Need for effective governance (robust institutions, sound mechanisms and meaningful processes) at various levels, applying a human rights-based approach

Antigua and Barbuda

- Although fishers incomes are above minimum wage there is risk of poverty arising from vulnerability to natural disasters and exogenous economic shocks: need for diversification of the tourism-based economy; need to develop under-exploited pelagic fisheries
- There is a robust social security system offering most of the social security benefits to fishers and their dependents (e.g. sickness benefits, medical benefits, invalidity benefits, maternity benefits, old age benefits, family benefits), there is, however, room for improvement
- Free and compulsory education for children between the age of 5 and 16 (28% of fishers are college or university educated)
- Fishers have to undergo mandatory training in fisheries laws, safety at sea, seafood safety, etc.

Antigua and Barbuda (Cont.)

- Increasing frequency and intensity of tropical storms forcing to review its Building Code
- Public utilities like water, electricity and telecommunication are accessible; water is subsidized
- Secure tenure rights for fishers remains a challenge due to power wielded by the tourism industry
- The Labour Code articulates the core labour standards of ILO
- Human rights are protected by the Constitution; people have access to judicial review of any action of the executive; people have right to information and access justice regarding environmental matters (the Escazú Agreement for LAC)
- Legislation and support services to address gender-based violence
- Relevant provisions of the C188 Work in Fishing Convention, 2007, are incorporated into the Fisheries Act, 2008 and Fisheries Regulations 2013
- Need for unemployment benefits and universal health care

Costa Rica

- Majority of artisanal and small-scale fishers and fishworkers are considered informal and excluded from many of the social benefits for formalized workers
- Social security benefits are extended to migrant workers
- Social development initiatives to benefit small-sale and artisanal fishing communities of public institutions and NGOs are heterogenous
- Social development schemes for coastal communities are impacted by poor institutional coordination
- Lack an effective implementation of a rights-based approach
- Public policy instruments recognize the role of women in fisheries
- Greater attention to be paid to youth in regard to education
- Impact of climate change to be better addressed
- Restore rights of Indigenous Peoples to marine and inland water bodies
- Promote forums to discuss social and environmental issues and impact of blue economy

Brazil

- Elementary education of fishers (61.4%), high school (8%) and university (0.3%)
- HDI value has been falling, and income inequality rising; artisanal fishers and their families lag behind in terms of all human development indicators (those in the north are poorer than those in the south)
- *Bolsa familia* or Family Allowance Programme (a conditional cash transfer programme of the Federal Govt against sending your children to attend school, child immunization and prenatal monitoring of pregnant women, remedial education, etc.) serving 14 million families, including 280,000 fishers' families; nearly one million people from fishing families benefit from this scheme
- *Bolsa Verde* or Green Grant for about 53,000 families who live in protected areas to assist these families to conserve and manage protected areas including fishery resources. It was discontinued since 2018 due to lack of resources
- *Seguro defeso* an unemployment insurance scheme for artisanal fishers during closed seasons (all artisanal fishers are covered under this scheme)
- *Minha Casa Minha Vida* (My home, my life) covers fishing families (nearly 50% of fishers families have accessed credit for housing)

Brazil (cont.)

- Unified health system (SUS) serves fishers and coastal people in regard to health and sanitation (56% fishers have access to piped water supply)
- Targeted social insurance for fishers (younger age for retirement, shorter contribution time and low levels of remuneration), but no employment injury or sickness benefits, nor paid leave benefits
- Social inclusion--equality before the law, right to education, health for all, rights of elderly, protection of women against domestic violence: physical, psychological, moral, sexual, and patrimonial, rights of invalids, quotas for blacks, browns, and IPs, recognition of collective rights of Indigenous Peoples and *quilombola* communities to land; IPs can use their languages and learning processes
- Violence against women and children is very high including in fishing communities

Social movements in Brazil to combat violence against women

- National Movement of Men and Women Fishers (MPP), the Women Network of Fishing Communities of Southern Bahia, Women Network of Amazonian Mangroves (MA, PI, PA and AP), Women Network of APA Costa dos Corais, Women Network of the Delta do Parnaíba and the Movement of the Mangaba Gatherers of the state of Sergipe
- Social movements demand social inclusion and sustainability of resources (recognition of local and traditional knowledge in resource management)

Bangladesh

- Fishing is recognized as a green job and an important source of employment in rural areas
- Fishers average income per capita is below the national per capita income
- Only social assistance programme targeted at fishing communities is distribution of food rations during closed seasons (two ban periods during the year: March-April and October)
- 90% of houses are bamboo, tin and wood (threatened by river bank erosion), no special housing schemes for fishers
- Forced labour in fishing, long hours of work, no paid leave or overtime payment

Bangladesh (Cont.)

- Access to healthcare for fishers is low
- Poor access to potable water and sanitation (water supply schemes implemented by NGOs are successful)
- Gender parity in access to education at primary and secondary levels (girls outnumber boys); there are active women's savings and credit groups; women are active in inland aquaculture operations
- Threatened by climate change impacts (although contribution to GHGs is very low); 13% of the population lives in disaster prone areas
- Fishers face cyclones and extreme weather events, fish stocks are shifting; ingress of salt water leads to decline in freshwater fish production
- Insecure land tenure

India

- Improve access to education and healthcare
- Improve access to information technology and internet as a tool to improve access to education
- Secure land tenure rights for fishing communities including community land use
- Alternative employment opportunities to be provided, and compensation to be enhanced during the monsoon ban period
- Occupational injury benefits and disability benefits to be enhanced
- Similar to social security benefits for fishers, such benefits to be introduced for allied workers in fisheries (mostly women)
- Fisheries management measures to compensate for their livelihood impacts

India (Cont.)

- Preferential access to fishery resources and the right to conserve and manage these resources (exclusive zone for small fishers)
- Protecting rights of fish vendors to social security
- Protection of tiger/crocodile widows of Sunderbans
- Prevent early marriage of the girl child

The Philippines

- Strong legal foundations and defined institutional support for social development policies
- Poverty incidence amongst fishing communities is higher than the mainstream society
- The 1987 Constitution grants subsistence fishermen preferential use of the state-owned communal marine and fishing resources, both inland and offshore, supported with appropriate technology and research, adequate financial, production, and marketing assistance, and other services.

The Philippines (Cont)

- The Fisheries Code of 1998 as amended by RA 10654 grants municipal fishers preferential access to municipal waters.
- The Local Government Code of 1991 grants preferential treatment to organizations or cooperatives of marginal fishers with respect to access and use rights to a number of fishery resources within the jurisdiction of local govt units
- Small fishers are given the right to demand poverty-alleviation programmes : right to food, right to decent work, right to housing, right to relevant education and right to the highest attainable standard of health.

The Philippines (Cont)

- Securing tenure rights of municipal fishers
- Sectoral approach to fisheries governance need to integrate a human rights-based approach
- Need for a comprehensive social protection package for fishers
- Need to extend food-for-work programme to fishers in coastal cleanups and maintenance and protection of marine protected areas
- Provide social insurance to municipal fishers
- Secure land tenure for fishers
- Labour legislation applicable to fishing to be made consistent with C188 of ILO

Thailand

- Social development the highest reform agenda in Thailand and it includes gender equality and access to justice
- Education and public health are inclusive of all (formal, non-formal and informal education are accessible to fishing communities including children of unregistered migrant fishers)
- Need for greater integration of social development and social protection agencies
- Unregistered small-scale fishers and ethnic fishers need to benefit from social protection services
- Labour rights are protected (the only Asian country that has ratified C188 so far!) Freedom of association and collective bargaining need to be further upheld and strengthened
- Social development programmes need to be better integrated into fisheries programmes

Thailand (Cont.)

- Women need to be better integrated into decision-making and given better opportunities to upgrade their skills
- Better recognition of the rights of artisanal and small-scale fishers and fishworkers and decentralized management decision making to protect these rights
- Integrate social development into fisheries and natural resource management
- Adopt marine spatial planning to bring greater coordination among the central, provincial and local administrative bodies
- Ecosystem-based approach to resource management that takes into account the well-being of fishers and fishworkers

Ghana

- Ghanaian Constitution recognizes the right to just, equitable and inclusive social development
- Pension scheme for informal workers including fishers and fishworkers yet to be operationalized
- Working conditions are unsafe, unsanitary and rudimentary infrastructure for post-harvest operations, no focus on decent work in fisheries; inadequate health facilities for fishing communities, fishers are not enrolled in NHS
- Declining catch, seasonal work and high income volatility
- High incidence of child labour (nearly 22% of children)
- Inadequate social protection measures in the SSF subsector
- Poor access to sanitation, drinking water and energy

Ghana (Cont.)

- Robust traditional fisheries management authorities, fishers' organizations and trade unions; there is also a number of assns., coops, credit unions and SHGs at different levels (the vast majority of fishers and fishworkers, however, is not unionized)
- Overall poverty in fishing communities is on the rise (unlike the mainstream population) due to saiko fishing, declining fish landings, lack of secure tenure, unsustainable fishing practices, and lack of alternative work

Thank you