



EMPOWERING WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS IN SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES IN LIBERIA DURING AND AFTER COVID-19

In 2019, the world was struck by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected all sectors, including the livelihoods of rural communities. In Liberia, as in many countries, the government imposed restrictions and other public health measures to contain the spread of the virus. These measures rendered women vulnerable to shocks, thus creating the need for livelihood improvement at different levels. Other factors continually encroached on their livelihoods sustainability, particularly threats to marine resource losses, including the growing effects of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in Liberian waters. The project aimed to address two distinct but interrelated problems. First, the issue of the vulnerable nature of livelihoods among women in small-scale fishing, and second, the low awareness and limited capacity concerning PSMA implementation for preventing IUU fishing in Liberia. The project was implemented in three counties of Liberia: Montserrado, Margibi and Grand Bassa.



Fish processing training in Marshall – finished smoked product.

WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project provided both technical and technological solutions to the many challenges women face when using the traditional methods of fish processing. The improved and cost-effective technology of the FAO-Thiaroye Processing Technique (FTT) for smoking fish was introduced, greatly benefiting the 300 fishmongers who were trained in its construction and use. As the first of its kind, the capacity-building support that accompanied the successful introduction of the FAO-FTT in Liberia goes a long way towards contributing to curbing the environmental and socioeconomic challenges associated with the traditional methods of fish processing. In addition, over 1 000 fishmongers and fishers acquired increased knowledge and skill sets in improved fish hygiene, handling, conservation and processing food safety practices, and now have access to improved processing and marketing facilities and enhanced capacity on IUU fishing measures. Another important aspect of the project was the training and deepened cooperation and coordination of 42 interagency actors (government, civil society organizations, media, local authorities, and small-scale fisheries) on the application of FAO's Port States Measures Agreement (PSMA) to combat IUU fisheries activities.

KEY FACTS

Latest Approved Budget
USD 749 000

Duration
April 2021–December 2022

Resource Partner
Government of Japan

Partners
National Fisheries and Aquaculture
Authority of Liberia (NaFAA)

Beneficiaries
NaFAA, Liberia Artisanal Fishermen
Association, fishmongers and fishers

IMPACT

The project contributed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 2 and 8 with the availability of the improved fish processing facilities equipped with fish hygiene, handling, conservation, and processing tools/equipment kits and cold storage, enhanced transportation, and marketing facilities. Through the results of the interagency activities on PSMA, monitoring, control and surveillance (MSC) and awareness on IUU fishing, the project also contributed to SDGs 8 and 14; while the increase in income and livelihood improvement contributes to SDG 1 and 10. In addition, the project's focus on women and their contribution to the fishery sector amid the challenges they encounter on a daily basis was in alignment with SDG 5. Improved, environmentally friendly, solar-powered processing and market infrastructure underpinned achievements for SDG 9.

ACTIVITIES

- 300 sets of fish hygiene, handling, transformation, and distribution kits procured and delivered to fishmongers and processor organizations.
- 72 fishmongers and processors associations, government officials, civil society organizations, and fishing community leaders trained on improved fish hygiene and best practices in fish handling, processing and distribution, and COVID-19 measures.
- Improved processing facilities constructed, including FAO-FTT kilns and fish drying racks for women fishmongers in the three counties.
- Improved storage facilities (solar freezers, fish ice boxes, salting containers) provided to fishmongers.
- Selected journalists trained on reporting of IUU fishing and COVID-19 impact on livelihoods of coastal communities.
- South-South Knowledge Exchange programme organized in Ghana, for eight fishmongers from the three project counties, on the practical use and maintenance of the FTT facility, fish hygiene, handling, and processing and distribution best practices.
- Awareness campaign organized and facilitated on MCS, PSMA and IUU fishing.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Group photo of training participants in front of FTT facility in Marshall, June 2023, Liberia.



IUU Interagency workshop in Monrovia, February 2022, Liberia.



South-South Knowledge Exchange programme, October 2022, Ghana.

Project Title

Livelihood Empowerment of Women in Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) during and after COVID-19

Project Code

FAO: GCP/LIR/031/JPN

Contact

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