



**REGIONAL FISHERIES LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME  
FOR SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA (RFLP)**

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# **GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY**

**For the Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for South and Southeast Asia**

**Prepared by**

Angela Lentisco

Gender and M&E Advisor  
Regional Fisheries Livelihood Programme

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## A. List of Acronyms

APRACA	Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association
CFi	Community Fisheries
CRFM	Coastal Resource and Fisheries Management Plans
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
FA	Fisheries Associations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARMC	Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FiA	Fisheries Administration
GFP	Gender Focal Point
LGUs	Local Government Units
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
NDFA	National Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
RFLP	Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for South and Southeast Asia
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers

## B. Executive Summary

The report presents the process of gender mainstreaming in the RFLP and related lessons learned. The report starts with a brief summary of what the RFLP is, presenting the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and principles and provides a definition of the process of gender mainstreaming for the RFLP, and the RFLP gender aims; which include contributing to the reduction of gender based inequalities, encouraging men and women to participate in project activities (attending to their specific needs), and creating conditions for equitable access by men and women to project resources and benefits and equitable participation in decision-making processes.

The report then explains the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy of the RFLP providing detailed information on the phases of Design, Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation and Knowledge Sharing, including a selection of examples from RFLP countries.

The report concludes with an overview of the lessons learned obtained during the implementation of the RFLP gender strategy, the main achievements to date, and provides recommendations for follow up, particularly as part of the RFLP exit strategy.

Currently the RFLP will close at the end of August 2013, so the process of documenting the achievements and lessons learned has only just been started and will continue until programme closure.

## **C. Purpose of the report**

The aim of this report is to document the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy of the RFLP, in order to share knowledge and provide guidance to other projects and programmes, by describing the process of gender mainstreaming in the RFLP and related lessons learned.

## **D. Introduction**

### **1. About the Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme**

The Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for South and Southeast Asia (RFLP) is a four-year programme funded by the Government of Spain that is being executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the national agencies responsible for fisheries in six countries – Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. Its aim is to improve the livelihoods of small-scale coastal fisheries communities, while contributing to sustainable management of aquatic resources. To achieve this, the RFLP is working on 5 main outputs, which are: co-management (1), safety at sea and vulnerability reduction (2), post-harvest and marketing (3), livelihoods strengthening and diversification (4) and micro-finance services (5). The RFLP has gender mainstreaming as an important cross-cutting issue in its implementation.

The RFLP follows the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, working with people in fishing communities and their supporting institutions. The RFLP Sustainable Livelihoods Principles are<sup>1</sup>:

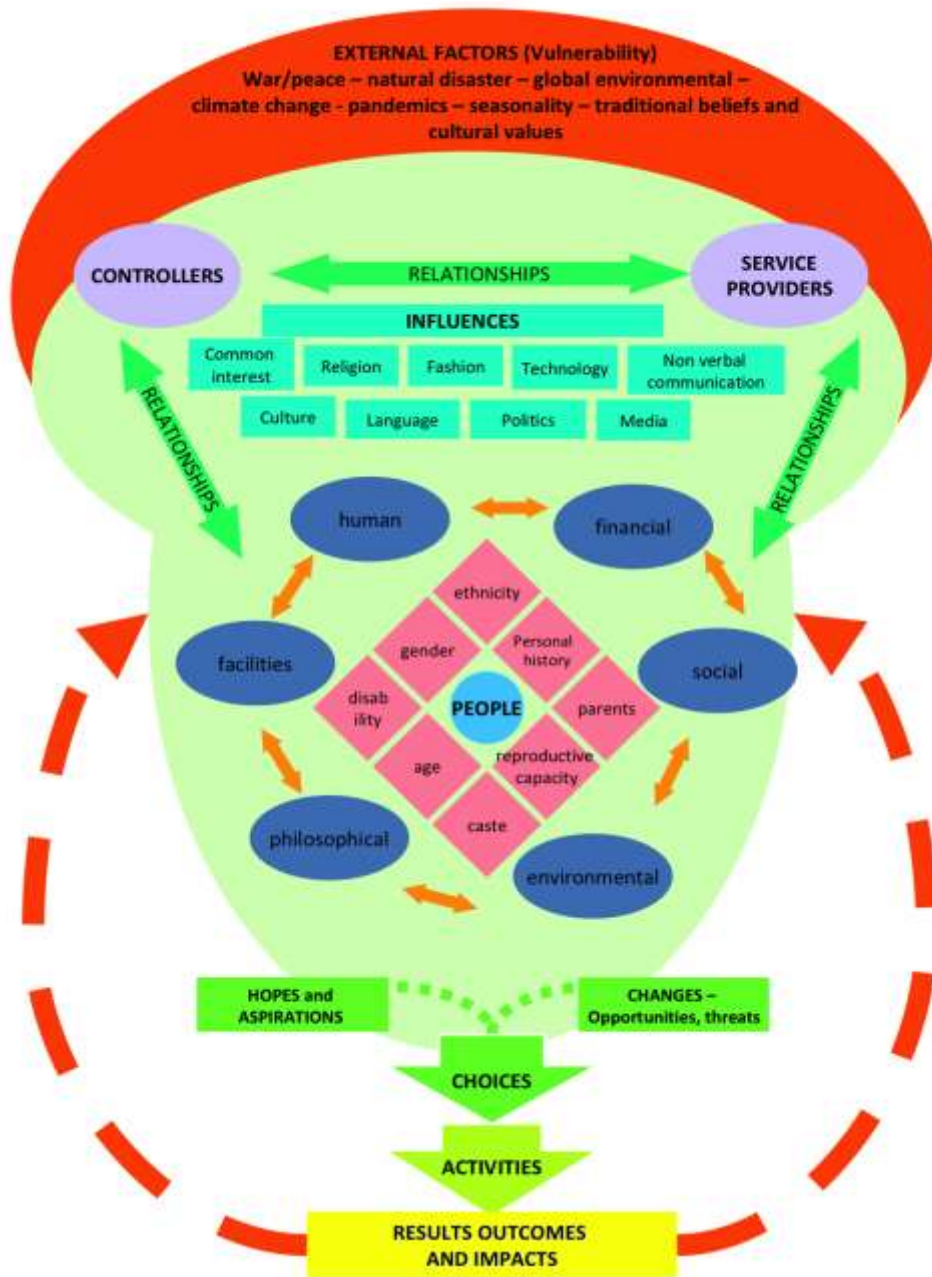
- a. RFLP activities will be designed to promote empowerment with the project fishing communities;
- b. RFLP will work as a partner in promoting strengthened fisheries livelihoods across the region;
- c. RFLP will use the strengths and potential of the people and institutions that is working with as the starting point for its development efforts;
- d. RFLP will put people at the centre of its plans and actions;
- e. RFLP will promote sustainable fisheries livelihoods in a holistic way;
- f. RFLP will provide a framework at the regional level that enables a clear sense of direction while allowing flexible and adaptable approaches to building fisheries livelihoods at national and local levels;

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<sup>1</sup> Cattermoul B., Townsley P. & Campbell J. An Introduction to the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach for the RFLP, FAO Regional Fisheries Livelihood Programme, June 2010

- g. RFLP outputs and activities will be designed in a way that are sensitive and responsive to the traditional cultures and norms of the six countries; and,
- h. RFLP will operate in a way that is transparent and accountable to the donor, national governments and the people that it is trying to help.

A diagram of the RFLP Sustainable Livelihoods framework is found below.



RFLP Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, (Cattermoul et al, 2010)

## 2. Definition of Gender Mainstreaming for the RFLP

The definition used by the RFLP for gender mainstreaming refers to “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated<sup>2</sup>.”

This means that for RFLP gender mainstreaming is a *process*, to be worked on over time and at all levels of programme intervention. The definition also involves an approach and a *modus operandi*, in order to assess the implications for women and men of planned actions and to take into account their specific (and often different) concerns, experiences and needs.

## 3. RFLP Gender Mainstreaming Aims

RFLP considers that is important to pay attention to gender issues during project design, monitoring, implementation and evaluation, as a cross-cutting priority, because:

- It is the *right* thing to do: The RFLP works to be fair and inclusive, in line with the international concerns of non-discrimination, globally highlighted in a number of international instruments and agreements, like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW, the Beijing Platform of Action, the Convention on Biological Diversity and also in Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals to “Promote gender equality and empower women”. Because women lack representation in decision-making bodies, including fisheries associations (which limits their full participation in fisheries co-management), the RFLP tries to ensure the provision of equal opportunities to men and women, making efforts to improve women’s representation and participation in decision-making.
- It is the *intelligent* thing to do: Both men and women, make important contributions to fishery-related activities, generally with a complementary division of labour, roles, and responsibilities. Because men and women are involved in different tasks, they possess different knowledge and skills that are relevant for the development of the sector. It is therefore of great importance to take into account men’s and women’s opinions, concerns, wants, needs and

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<sup>2</sup> by ECOSOC, 1997. Agreed Conclusions 1997/2, 18 July 1997. UN Economic and Social Council, 12

- expertise in order to design and implement successful interventions, whether fisheries or otherwise.
- It is the *sustainable* thing to do: Gender issues are not universal or static, they change over time, and they are different across cultures. To design and implement successful interventions, the reality of gender relations within the community at stake must be taken into account (through gender analysis) in order to obtain long-lasting results that continue once the project is finalized. In many cases, however, some interventions are still designed with a ‘Western’ bias of gender roles, and are not sensitive to the local context, which can undermine the sustainability of the project. To be sustainable, the project must be aware of the local reality, and be sensitive to the cultural context and gender issues.

In its efforts to do the *right, intelligent and sustainable* thing, the RFLP works towards four main gender aims:

### Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme: Gender Aims

1. Contribute as much as possible, to the reduction of gender based inequalities that may exist in the RFLP project area;
2. Encourage both men and women to participate in project activities; ensure that their specific needs are taken into account, that they benefit from the RFLP and that the RFLP impacts positively on their lives;
3. Create conditions for equitable access by men and women to project resources and benefits; and,
4. Create conditions for equitable participation in project implementation and decision-making processes, with special focus on co-management.



RFLP is working towards these aims by the implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, which is described in the following chapter.

## E. RFLP Gender Mainstreaming Strategy

As mentioned above, the RFLP considers that gender mainstreaming is a process that needs to be worked on over time and at all levels of programme interventions. The definition of gender mainstreaming (described above) involves an approach and a *modus operandi*, that requires attention during all stages of programme interventions: pre-assessing the implications for women and men of planned actions and taking into account their specific (and often different) concerns and experiences, and monitoring and assessing the impact of interventions in people’s livelihoods through Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) missions, specifically looking at women’s empowerment, potential changes in roles and relations at the household level, women’s participation in decision making, and potential negative side effects (like double burden, and domestic violence). The gender mainstreaming process followed by RFLP is summarized in the diagram below, and is divided in four interrelated sections. These sections are **Design** (during initial phases of the programme, including inception), **Implementation**, **Monitoring & Evaluation** and **Knowledge Sharing**.



## 1. Design phase

The design phase discussed here refers to the initial project phase, once it has been approved and is operational (rather than the identification and formulation phase). Many, if not all, planned activities will require a detailed gender analysis of the beneficiary communities to take place, as well as capacity building and awareness raising among stakeholders on the importance of taking gender aspects into account. These elements should be considered at the initial phases of the project (ideally, gender analysis should be part of the stakeholder analysis). However, it may take some time for project implementers to adapt and understand the local context, as well as to formalize the interaction with the counterparts. From a project management perspective, this may require that the order of interventions does not follow strictly the sequential order of the Project framework. For example, it may be the case that gaps in knowledge and understanding on how to deal with gender issues do not appear during the design phase and therefore are not planned for during initial implementation. Projects should be flexible to recognize the need for capacity building even if they were not initially planned for, designing and implementing interventions that promote/improve gender related activities at different project phases, and filling knowledge/capacity gaps that become apparent during any phase of the project. In this way, mainstreaming gender should not be an add-on, it must be considered at each and every project phase.

### a. **Capacity Building**

In order to provide guidance to country teams and government counterparts on gender issues and to facilitate project planning at the country level, RFLP carried out a number of interventions, such as:

- Inclusion of a gender session during the RFLP National Inception Workshops in all the six countries. For some counterparts, it was the first time they were exposed to the need to take gender equality concerns in the fisheries sector into account. Some countries requested more information and capacity building to address the matter. Thereafter gender training courses and workshops were added to national and regional activity work plans and budgets during the implementation phase, and these were generally well received by counterparts.
- Assignment of RFLP Gender Focal Points (GFP) at regional and national levels, with specific Terms of Reference (TOR) for the dissemination of information, knowledge sharing and gender advocacy purposes. In most RFLP countries, the Monitoring and Evaluation officers undertook this role (in collaboration with the Government GFP where such a position existed). A copy of the Terms of Reference of the GFP is given as Annex I. The main tasks of the GFP were: to facilitate discussion on gender-related information with RFLP stakeholders and especially government counterparts, as well as to encourage debate on gender dimensions at RFLP country offices, during meetings with stakeholders, other agencies and NGOs, in order to design and implement strategies which would maximize benefits to both women and men.

- Liaison with the Gender Focal Points from the National Fisheries Administration and other relevant government agencies, where they existed, including networking with other gender relevant organizations. For example, in Timor-Leste, there has been on-going discussion with the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI) to carry out a study on gender roles in the fisheries sector. The results of the study will generate a policy brief. In Viet Nam, there has been very close collaboration with the Women's Union to deliver gender training to fishing communities, and in Cambodia, a lot of work has been done through the Fisheries Administration (FiA) Gender Working Group.
- Publication of materials for knowledge sharing and awareness raising, like leaflets, fact sheets and training manuals, translated to the local language (see [www.rflp.org/gender](http://www.rflp.org/gender) for more details) including a Field Manual: Mainstreaming Gender in the Fisheries Sector.

## b. Gender Analysis

Gender analyses were carried out in the RFLP countries during the initial baseline surveys, against the five outputs. This helped define activities in national work plans and the setting of gender targets and indicators in national log-frames. Some countries further undertook gender analysis or livelihoods assessment with a gender perspective, as well as women in fisheries studies, depending on the knowledge gaps and information found in each country. The possibilities to undertake in-depth studies at country level were variable, resulting in different strategies. Some of the main findings of the baseline gender analyses were:

In **Cambodia**, the baseline survey identified that women were less satisfied and engaged than men in fisheries management and livelihoods development interventions from other agencies', and recommended that specific attention should be given to improve women's participation in Community Fisheries (CFi) decision-making bodies.

The baseline survey in **Timor-Leste**, although with some short-comings in its methodological approach, identified a clear separation of gender roles, with men going to sea to fish (though some women were reported to play an important role in reef gleaning activities), and with women commonly active in selling and processing of aquatic products, managing household finances and other domestic roles (cooking, cleaning, child care). It was recommended that training should be provided for women in fish processing techniques to increase the shelf life and value of the catch. Also recommended was capacity building in managing finances related to savings and loan activities, including household financial management, especially for women who usually manage the family or household finances. In addition, women should be encouraged to establish women's groups and be active in alternative livelihoods programs. The study also noted variations depending on the districts surveyed and the activities women were engaged in.

In **Viet Nam**, the baseline survey indicated that there was a division of labour between fisher households of different fishing groups. In marine fishing households, only the men went to sea in boats to fish, while in lagoon fishing households, both men and women used boats to fish. While most women of offshore fishing households were less likely to work outside the home, women from inshore fishing households were more likely to also sell fish or to do other income generation activities such as services, vendors, and fish processing, in

addition to doing household work. It was reported that women from lagoon fishing households worked long hours, doing daily fishing with their husbands for about 12 hours, bringing products to the market, and additionally doing the housework. In the afternoons they supported their husbands to repair fishing gear. It appeared that women from lagoon fishing households had very little time free time for relaxation or entertainment. In the marine fishing households, most women and children were not engaged in any income generation activities, however, some children from lagoon fishing households fished with their parents. The baseline survey also noted a change in the livelihoods of fishing communities, indicating that fishing was no longer the choice of many young people. The lagoon and inshore fishers in particular did not want their children to be fishers and many young people (including children) were moving to big cities to earn money. The survey also reflected the little awareness between fishers and government staff on the concept of co-management, despite the presence of a network of Fisheries Associations in the province. This lack of knowledge seemed to result in a low perception of fishers on the need to apply co-management for resource management and livelihoods improvements. Women were even less informed and had lower understanding of the meaning of co-management than men, and they also did not consider it was useful, or did not know why it was useful.

The baseline survey in the **Philippines** stated that political meetings were mainly the domain of men, with some exceptions (e.g. in Dipolog it was observed that political meetings were dominated by women, while in Roxas it appeared to be a shared activity). With regards to the division of labor, “cooperative work that requires manual labor” was reported to be the domain of men, although no detail was given on what type of work that definition implied. In contrast, the baseline observed that attending school meetings and related activities was women’s responsibility. The survey also stated that women were responsible for preparing food. Both men and women shared going to church and related activities involving faith, revealing a strong religious belief of men and women in the project sites. Similarly, it was reported that men and women were almost equally involved in the protection and conservation of the environment. The baseline further stated that “although women do not currently have a significant involvement in fisheries management, the task of increasing their involvement in fisheries management should not be that difficult”, mainly because of their joint involvement in conservation, but also perhaps indicating that as women play a significant role in productive (as well as non-productive) fisheries related activities, they should be provided with the opportunity to discuss management issues in the existing decision-making mechanisms. The review of secondary data showed that the number of women who were involved full time in fishery activities was extremely small, although more reliable data may be needed to determine the specific roles (and their value) of men and women in fisheries. Women’s involvement appeared to be more important during pre- and post-fishing, but not in actual fishing. Some women were only involved in near-shore fishing like beach seining (*panahid*). In contrast, in Roxas, women seemed to be involved in actual fishing. The baseline survey concluded that women could be more involved and productive if they were provided with enough fish processing skills, to increase the value addition of products instead of selling them directly to middle buyers.

The **Indonesian** baseline survey stated that women play supporting roles to the fishing activities at sea, which were usually undertaken by men. Baseline survey data showed that women in the surveyed areas spent more time on domestic activities, including care and maintenance of the household and its members, rather than on productive (income generating) or community work. Women spent more of their time bearing and caring for children than on any other activity. This situation was more intensive for women with young

children (under school age) that require almost constant care. Women did these activities usually without assistance from the husband or other household members and this was more the case particularly for women in Kupang Municipality who had fewer nearby relatives who could assist. With regards to decision-making, fisher households in the surveyed areas reported that men and women made joint decisions for all important aspects of the household, with the exception of deciding on food items and spending on food, which was decided almost exclusively by women. However, men dominated decision making in most areas related to production. Social activities undertaken by women included religious, community health care, social gatherings. In the Christian community groups, for example, religious activities conducted included church services or religious meetings in homes. For Muslim groups, religious activities in which women participated included preaching at mosques, Islamic commemoration days, and thanksgiving. Women in all districts/municipalities participated in religious, community health care, and social gatherings, but less so in community meetings. At community events such as a national commemoration, celebration, community service, etc., women did the jobs that were domestic in nature, like cooking. In contrast, the planning and execution of these activities was usually carried out predominantly by men. Although women were involved in discussion meetings their activities were largely limited to food preparation and they had only limited involvement in the decision making process. The baseline study further stated that specific targeted development efforts were required to facilitate the involvement of women, to encourage women's group formation and capacity development and to involve them more actively in sustainable fisheries management in NTT province.

In **Sri Lanka**, the baseline survey highlighted the important role that women play in fisheries co-management. Despite the fact that women in Sri Lanka rarely fished, fishers generally expected their wives to participate in meetings when they are unable to attend. Women therefore did play some role in the management decision-making process, however, because they do not fish themselves, they were not legally allowed to be members of fisheries organizations like Fisheries Committees. The need to improve post-harvest losses by women was highlighted. Women also showed more interest in alternative livelihoods than men, expressing their preference on the preparation of dried fish, *maldive* fish and *jadi*. During further consultations (see box below) women expressed their interest in participating in non-fisheries related livelihoods options. The income generated by women would allow fishing household's to better cope with fluctuation of fishing incomes. The survey also indicated that fisher household savings were used to improve small livelihoods/enterprises, children's education, purchase household goods, and to repair and construct houses. The baseline study also indicated that women saved at home to meet domestic needs before depositing money in bank accounts, and that this provided an opportunity to work with women on micro-finance.

### Gender Analysis: an example of Sri Lanka

Gender analysis was conducted during in November 2011 in order to understand the gender differences in the division of labor and the access to and control over resources and practical needs and strategic interests of women and men in the districts of Negombo and Puttalam. The specific objectives of the analysis were:

1. To understand the gender differences in the division of labor at the household and community level;
2. To analyze the level of access to and control over resources by gender; and,

3. To identify the level of mobility by gender and by purpose.

Primary data were collected from eight communities in Negombo and Puttalam using four men's and four women's focus group discussions. A total of 80 community members (40 men and 40 women) participated in the group discussions. Four different tools were used to collect data as follows.

**Tool 1: Gender-disaggregated seasonal activities calendar;** This tool was used to generate information on the gender-based division of labor and responsibilities in livelihoods systems and resource management.

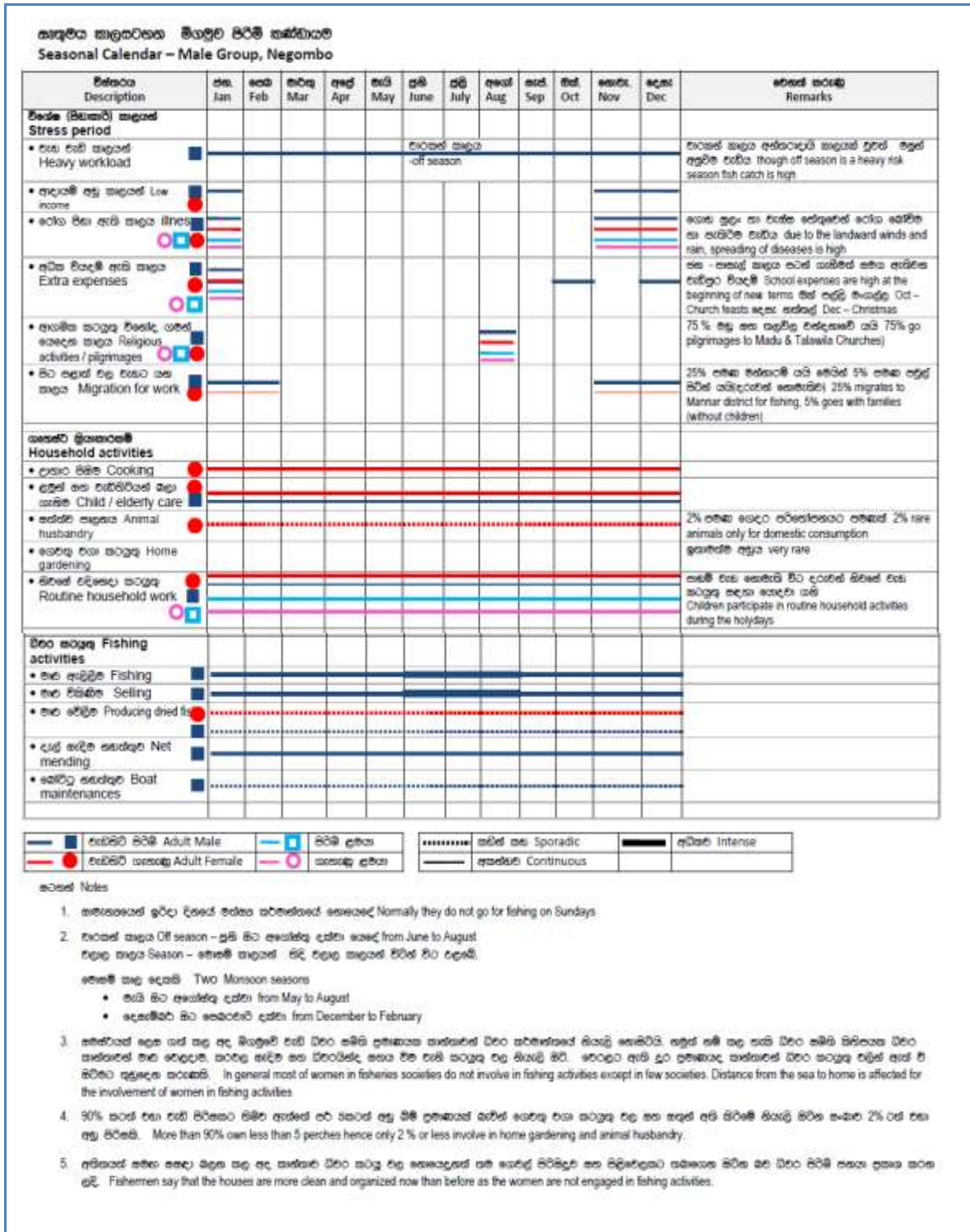
**Tool 2: Daily activity schedule;** This tool generated information on gender based daily activities of a rural fishing household in the project area. Data were collected separately for the categories of adult men, adult women, girls, boys and elderly people in a family for a typical week day and the weekend.

**Tool 3: Gender resource mapping;** This tool was used to present the rural landscape as an arena of complementary and/or conflicting relationships between men, women, and children in regard to natural resources. The 'gender map' represents men, women, and children as distinct land user groups and thereby clarifies the intra-household division of control (C), responsibility (R), and labour (L) of resources and related activities.

**Tool 4: Gender based mobility map;** This tool generated information on gender-based mobility of a rural fishing household in the project area. The movements (and frequencies) of adult men, adult women, girls and boys were illustrated using four different colours.

An example of the seasonal calendar can be found below (the full gender analysis is available at [www.rflp.org/gender](http://www.rflp.org/gender)).

For guidance on the use of other tools for gender analysis in fisheries development projects, visit the Mainstreaming Gender into Project Cycle Management in the Fisheries Sector (Arenas, M.C., & Lentisco. A.). A copy of the handbook can be downloaded in: [http://www.rflp.org/mainstreaming\\_gender/](http://www.rflp.org/mainstreaming_gender/)



Courtesy of RFLP Sri Lanka

### c. Gender Checklist

RFLP recommends carrying out a detail gender analysis at the beginning of the intervention. Checklists can also be a useful way to consider if gender issues have been taken

into account. Below is a checklist<sup>3</sup> of things that fisheries projects should consider before starting implementation:

- What different activities are carried out by girls and women and by men and boys in fish catching and processing, aquaculture, and marketing?
- Do women catch or buy fish for processing, or process the catch of male household members?
- What activities are performed jointly by women and men?
- Are there differences in time spent, or seasonal differences for separate or joint activities?
- Will the project affect any of these activities and the level of female involvement or women's incomes?
- Will the project increase the burden on women's time?
- Do women work in the fish processing centre as wage labourers or are they self-employed (buy fish to process and market)?
- Do women regularly go fishing or is this a seasonal activity?
- Is marketing of fish a regular activity or an extra source of income for the women?
- Do women depend on brokers to market their fish or do they market it themselves?
- Do women fish sellers have a place and license to sell in the market?
- Do women and men have fishing equipment, such as boats or nets? Do they depend on brokers or traders for capital and equipment?
- Do women fish sellers depend on private moneylenders/traders for capital or do they have access to formal sources of credit?
- Do poor women and men have access to the lease of inland fishery resources such as lakes, rivers, or ponds, or is access limited to men only?
- Will the project activities change the gender division of labor in catching, processing, and marketing fish in marine fisheries and/or inland fisheries?
- Are women represented in fisheries association or other fisheries management bodies?
- Do women have the same mobility as men?
- Do women and men have the same access and control over the resources and benefits?
- Who controls the household budget?
- Are there any laws, regulations, or social norms that may hinder women's participation in decision-making or in productive roles?
- Have you envisaged monitoring indicators to assess the gender impact of the project?
- Are women's reproductive roles taken into account during the design and implementation of the project?
- Is the counterpart agency supportive of taking into account gender equality issues and promoting women's empowerment?

## **2. Implementation Phase**

### **a. Activity Implementation**

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<sup>3</sup> Taken and expanded from the Asian Development Bank, Gender Checklist in Agriculture, 2006.  
[http://www2.adb.org/Documents/Manuals/Gender\\_Checklists/Agriculture/agri0502.asp](http://www2.adb.org/Documents/Manuals/Gender_Checklists/Agriculture/agri0502.asp)



RFLP has made significant effort to increase and improve the quality of participation of women during its interventions. Some of the actions done to address this include:

- Increasing the **flexibility** of activity implementation to allow more women to participate during RFLP interventions. In order to maximize the participation of women, the RFLP conducts most of its trainings, meetings, consultations etc. at locations in villages that minimize travel time, or have arranged vehicles for beneficiaries when travel is required, and have also ensured safe accommodation is available if travel and overnight stays are needed. Women's preferred time is considered when scheduling trainings or meetings, and they are allowed to bring their young children with them and to provide childcare.
- All agreements and other contracts like letters of agreement with implementing stakeholders are screened to ensure that they specify the number of women and men participating in project interventions and have adequately assessed the likely impacts (both positive and negative) that RFLP activities are likely to have on female and male beneficiaries. In many contracts, service providers have been asked to include sex-disaggregated indicator targets to provide project staff with information on how many women and men will be participating in specific activities. With sound information on gender roles and relations (obtained through detailed gender analysis), the activities can adequately be adapted to be targeted to women, men, or both – however, in the absence of such detailed gender analysis, RFLP recommends not making decisions based on stereotypes for the selection of beneficiaries, and to try and involve men and women in all possible activities.
- **Efforts** have been made to improve women's participation (in terms of the absolute numbers and the proportion of women involved, and the level and quality of their involvement) in project interventions. The RFLP has tried to target specific activities to women and activities to men, based on their specific needs (see the section on lessons learned for a discussion on setting the limit, quotas and challenging traditional roles). The RFLP has considered how to involve women in all its 5 outputs. A number of studies have recommended that activities in post-harvest (output 3), diversified or improved livelihoods options (output 4), and micro-finance services (output 5) should be mainly targeted to women. For example, the study that APRACA conducted on micro-finance services available for the fisheries sector, highlighted the important role that women play in household finance management and recommended that micro-finance services were targeted at women, supporting livelihoods diversification activities. The RFLP has also made efforts to improve women's participation in decision-making mechanisms, especially in co-management (output 1). Some examples of the effort in these areas include:
  - o In **Viet Nam**, although in fishing communities planting and livelihoods production has always been done mostly by women, as income from inshore fisheries has become unstable, and even declined, the contribution of women to fishing household income has increased. Fishing communities are not prioritized for agricultural and off-farm training courses and extension model implementation in government programmes, and therefore have weak access to technical knowledge and support that would improve their production and yield. RFLP in Viet Nam has targeted these communities for implementing alternative livelihoods models. Coastal fisher folk now have access to new techniques, extension services and livestock species that have already proved more cost-effective in the recent model implementation in other areas of Viet

Nam. There are two important gender aspects for the successful promotion of alternative livelihoods models. First, women are learning new techniques to improve their traditional activities. Second, through better farming practices and off-farm activities, women earn more money that contributes to household income, reducing their dependency on income from fishing conducted by their husbands. This contributes towards women's empowerment through higher economic status, and the labour of women in fishing communities is given the recognition it deserves. Wives have reported that their husbands do not need to risk going fishing in extreme weather and wave conditions when wives are generating income from improved RFLP supported livelihoods.

- In **Sri Lanka**, a large portion of the selected beneficiaries for the activities under output livelihoods (4) and micro-finance (5) are women, including home gardens, vocational training, the micro-enterprise programme, a dried fish making programme, micro-finance cluster programme, etc. With regards to the participation of women in decision-making, the inclusion of women representatives in co-management coordination committees has been made compulsory, as well as the inclusion of a minimum of two women directors in the Fish Finance Network Association. With RFLP support and advocacy, the Sri Lankan government plans to make a revision of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act No. 2 of 1996 (which currently does not allow women to be members of Fisheries Committees) so that it will include wider stakeholder participation and consultation in fisheries planning. This will represent an unprecedented opportunity to allow women to become legal members of Fisheries Committees.
- In **Cambodia**, most training courses have had women's participation as high as 40 percent. There were also specific training courses that largely targeted women, including chicken rearing, rice bank and fisheries product processing and technology. A women's fish sauce production group has been formed. Women's participation as members in the formation of business groups, namely a fermented fish production group, chicken raising groups, rice bank groups, and saving groups has been outstanding. In addition, the crab bank and savings and credit group comprises 80 percent women members. Women have also been actively encouraged to join patrolling teams that are being formed to conduct joint patrolling of Community Fisheries fishing areas with the fisheries authorities and the police.
- In **Indonesia**, RFLP is being more flexible on the participation of women and selecting meeting and training locations that are more convenient for easier mobility e.g. training courses/meetings conducted in or near their villages allowing women to bring their nursing/pre-school children with them if needed. Many activities have been carried out under post-harvest output (3) and the livelihoods diversification output (4). These activities have enhanced women's income in coastal fisher communities where few other income generation opportunities exist. In addition, RFLP Indonesia, in conjunction with its implementing partners, has also made efforts to involve more women in the process of co-management, including their participation in MPA management processes and integration with *Lilifuk* (an indigenous culture for

natural resource conservation). These efforts allow them to express their opinion at village meetings. This is done through a participatory process that involves various women representatives, including housewives, village government staff, local NGOs, and heads of women's groups.

- In the **Philippines**, women have been mainly involved in livelihoods and post-harvest related activities, for example participating in training on value-added processing techniques for fisheries products, and other non-fisheries activities like sewing. The RFLP is also making efforts to increase their involvement in Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Committee (FARMC) meetings, promoting the allocation of at least 30 percent women members and seats for women on FARMC committees. Women are being invited to participate in MPA surveys and management planning.
- In **Timor-Leste**, the local context dictates that activities are more focused on co-management (1) and safety at sea (2) outputs, where RFLP is promoting gender equality under sustainable resource management. An example of this is having women for the first time as signatories of the *Tara-Bandu* (traditional resource management practice), and by enhancing the capacity of the (few) female staff members of the Fisheries Department. Under the post-harvest output (3), Trainer of Trainer training on basic hygiene and ice production and ice cold chain use targeted a key female government staff member who has since conducted fish processing training courses for primarily women. Thus far only one woman is using her new skills and selling fish ball products. Other women have requested additional input support and an FAO Telefood project will be implemented in response to this request.

For more information on additional way that RFLP has involved women in programme activities visit the website [www.rflp.org](http://www.rflp.org).

### **3. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RFLP Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System was designed to show if project activity implementation was on track against the approved activity work plan and budgets, and also to show what progress was being made towards the achievement of RFLP outcomes. Through the M&E System, country teams are providing information on RFLP results and impact, both expected results (as identified by the gender sensitive Log-frame indicators), and unexpected results which are being picked up by a specifically designed Monitoring & Evaluation matrix.

From a gender perspective, the M&E System includes:

- The use of **gender sensitive indicators**, largely based on the six national baseline surveys and gender analysis (carried out in the inception phase) and findings during implementation.
- The **collection of sex-disaggregated data** for all project activities at country level, including meetings and trainings.
- During regular M&E missions, guidance questions for **gender impact assessments** (see next section on Gender Impact Assessment) are used to monitor and document the gender impact of RFLP interventions.

- For **reporting**, the RFLP has added a specific gender section to its six monthly progress reporting format provided to the Spanish donor, FAO and the implementing governments.

#### a. Gender sensitive indicators

Gender targets and indicators have been set in all six RFLP national log-frames, for measurement of the gender related impact of RFLP activities over the programme life and to allow checking of progress towards target gender indicators during back-stopping monitoring and evaluation missions. These log-frame indicators were reviewed half way through the implementation of the programme (during its second year). A major revision was then conducted to bring gender and log-frame indicators fully into alignment with country strategies and national government agendas. Some examples of the gender indicators (reviewed) are:

#### Gender Sensitive Indicators

##### Sri Lanka

- Degree/extent of women recognized as members of co-management mechanisms;
- Perceived extent of awareness of quality improvement issues by post harvest beneficiaries by men / women;
- Changes in daily calendar and mobility map of livelihoods beneficiaries disaggregated by gender;
- Awareness of fishers and household members on type and conditions of loans lent by banking / other financial institutions by men/women;
- Level of awareness of rights and responsibilities by men / women;
- At least 20% of women representation in co-management authorities;
- Women participation in monthly meetings;
- Women participating in training events (%);
- Livelihoods and gender needs assessment report/study completed and disseminated;
- Women associations formed/strengthened into enterprise groups;
- Women's participation in livelihoods diversification training events;
- Women's participation in land-based livelihoods projects (products and services);
- Women's participation in small-scale aquaculture/mariculture projects of target enterprise groups; and,
- Women's participation in aquaculture projects supported and implemented by target management groups.

##### Viet Nam

- The level of participation of Fishery Association (FA) members (women and men) in the process of developing resource management plans;
- The extent of satisfaction that FA members (women and men) have about the usefulness of the resource-management plans to enhance the status of the resources;
- The level of satisfaction of the members with the FAs (women and men);
- Perceptions of fishers and women on safety at sea measures (including the use of safety equipment);
- The extent that fishers and women are confident to perform on-land disaster preparedness;
- The perceptions of fishers and women on food safety level at fish markets/landing sites;
- The extent that (male/female) processors demonstrate adequate knowledge of quality improvement measures; and,
- The level of satisfaction that FA members, particularly women, with non-fishing

livelihoods.

### Indonesia

The RFLP INS revised log frame and indicators has defined several intermediate outcome indicators to gauge gender impact:

- Pilot Community Control Group (CCG) is functional (CCG is formed, CCG members of men and women aware of their role, CCG receive legally recognized from the government, CCG work plan available);
- Increased income of households (especially women processors);
- Fisher folks (men and women) exhibit enhanced knowledge and access to alternative / supplementary livelihoods; and,
- Fisher folks (men and women) have better understanding to have insurance protection for family and other products from MFIs (micro-finance institutions).

### Cambodia

- Degree/extent of women's satisfaction with co-management/CFi activities (including participation in meetings and decision making process);
- Number of co-management meetings held (by cantonment) between CFI committee members, government staff and women and male fishers;
- Fishers (women and men) exhibit increased confident regarding Safety at Sea;
- New/improved post-harvest techniques in use by fishers and fish processors (women and men);
- Fishers (women and men) perceive an improvement in the capacity of government officers to provide Post-harvest support;
- Degree/extent of fisher and fisher household member (both men and women) satisfaction with RFLP livelihoods options; and,
- Number and type of micro-finance services that are available to fisher community members (women and men) by government and private banks and micro-finance institutions.

### Philippines

- Bay-wide local government unit (LGU) alliances (men and women organizations included) formed and established to co-manage common fishing grounds (#);
- City/Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Councils established/strengthened to co-manage municipal waters (with active men and women leaders/members, implemented plans) (#);
- Ecosystems approach to fisheries (EAF) management measures adopted and implemented collaboratively by LGUs and fishers and women's associations (#);
- Increased satisfaction of community fishers and women on execution of LGU fishery policies;
- DRRM activities at community levels demonstrating improved capacities of both men and women;
- Coastal community men and women demonstrated satisfaction with LGU implementation of DRRM policies, plans and activities;
- Fishing communities, groups, traders, processors (both men and women) demonstrating sanitary and hygienic practices in fish harvesting/catching, fish handling, fish trading, and fish processing;
- Fishing communities/groups, traders, processors (both men and women) demonstrating new practices (knowledge and skills) as value-addition to fish and fishery products;
- Fishers, traders, vendors, processors (both men and women) demonstrating increased or maintained sales volume and/or buyers;
- Alternative livelihoods pilots catering fishers or women groups launched (#);

- Fishers groups and/or women associations groups demonstrating knowledge and skills in planning and implementing alternative livelihoods;
- Increased satisfaction of fishers and women groups of implementation and benefits received from livelihoods pilots;
- Fishers/women livelihoods groups participating in formal micro-finance schemes; and,
- Fishers/women livelihoods groups demonstrating awareness on micro-financing uptake.

#### Timor-Leste

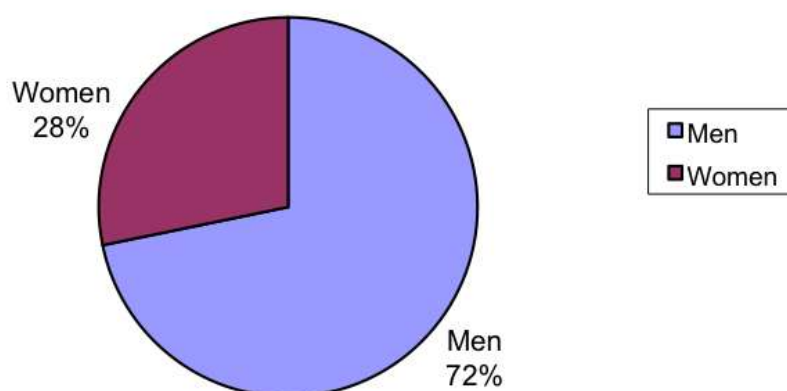
Besides the gender sensitive indicators below, RFLP Timor-Leste will carry out a gender roles survey to obtain more detailed and reliable information on gender roles in Timorese fishing communities (see the section on lessons learned for more information).

- Women's participation in formal fisheries co-management organizations/mechanisms;
- Awareness of importance of fish in diet amongst fishers' families increased; and,
- Increased consumption of fisheries products by men and women.

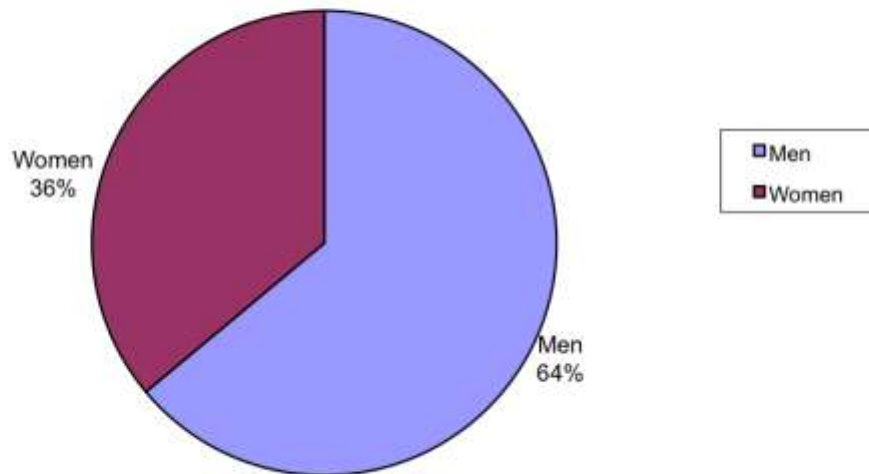
#### b. Sex-disaggregated data

As a normal practice, RFLP project data is being sex-disaggregated for all project activities, especially for training and relevant meetings. This is important in order to know the number of women and men participating in RFLP interventions.

#### Women and Men's participation in RFLP activities - 1H2011



## Women and Men's Participation in RFLP activities - 2H2011



It should be noted that the intrinsic value of these numbers has to be considered carefully – the importance of the activities has to be weighed by the quality of participation and engagement, and not only by simply the number of men and women participating. For example a consultancy survey carried out with 1,000 fishers (only men if they are the only ones fishing), may not be as relevant (in gender terms) as processing training provided to 30 women. Similarly changing a government rule that allows the participation of women fishers as full members of a Fisheries Committee, as RFLP is supporting in Sri Lanka, has significant gender equality significance. Numbers here therefore just appear as overall information, but the impact of the trainings and meetings on women's and men's involvement with the project needs to be documented through gender assessments (at the time of writing this report, the RFLP is currently undertaking Gender Impact Assessments).

### c. Gender Impact Assessments

RFLP prepared guidance notes/questionnaire to support the assessment of the *design* and *impact* of RFLP related to gender.

Some countries (e.g. Indonesia) are in the process of undertaking a gender assessment of RFLP impact that will examine:

- The effects of RFLP interventions at household level, identifying possible changes of gender roles and relations of women's participation in decision-making, and identify any potential negative side effects (e.g. increase in domestic violence, double burden, etc.);
- Identify the existence (or not) of double burden as a result of RFLP activities, and how women are dealing with it; and,

- Identify and document specific examples through change stories or case studies that illustrate women's empowerment as a result of project interventions.

The assessment will also include the identification of lessons learned and good practices and recommendations for follow up actions.

The work will be carried out closely with local and national authorities, in order to provide on-the-job training to effectively mainstream gender in the context of fishing communities, enhancing their ability to assess the gender impact of fisheries projects, especially during planning, monitoring and evaluation.

#### **d. Guidance questions for gender assessments during M&E**

Currently the RFLP country teams are in the process of assessing, as part of M&E, the gender related impact of RFLP activities in fishing households and fishing communities, and potential changes in gender roles and relations.

Below are overall guidance questions that were provided to the project teams for flexible use during field visits. The questions are to be used as checklists as part of routine M&E visits, through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) or during interviews. It has been recommended that where possible separate men's and women's FGD groups are arranged, because some women may be reluctant to speak freely in front of men. Subsequent bringing together of the men's and women's groups allows cross checking of information from both. FGD facilitators were instructed to manage the groups in such a way that all participants are able to express their views and participate. RFLP provided regional funds to support M&E and gender impact assessment and encouraged national offices to engage external gender expertise when required to ensure unbiased and in-depth analysis. M&E officers were also recommended to carry out observation as an important methodology, to check whether what people said they do, was in line with what they actually did.

#### **Guidance Questions for Gender Impact Assessment**

##### **At household level**

- Have there been any changes in roles and relations?
  - Are women taking on activities that before were considered male only?
  - Are men taking on activities that were considered female only?
- Who makes the decisions about the household budget?
- Have there been any negative side effects? Ask them if the RFLP has impacted them negatively in any way. There might be sensitive issues difficult to discuss, be considerate, think how you phrase your questions, you could ask general questions (have they heard of this, are they aware if there is any case of domestic violence in their community as a result of participation in the project? For example, and so on), instead of asking directly about their own situation.
- To assess the double burden of women, you could ask them how are they coping with the new activities they are doing as part of their involvement with the RFLP, and the old ones – are they receiving help



- from other members in the household to do the domestic work?
- Etc.

#### **At productive/community level**

- Are women more active now in decision-making?
  - In co-management?
  - In other areas of productive level?

You can ask them for their own perceptions on how decisions are made, but also try to judge by your own observations during meetings, and by asking others how they perceive their contributions.

- Are women more involved now in community actions, including decision-making?
- Are there any specific examples to illustrate the process of women's empowerment?
- Etc.

#### **At governance/policy making level**

*These questions can be asked directly to government officers, but also directly to community members to cross-check the information.*

- How supportive are the local and national government institutions in your gender mainstreaming work?
- What kind of government (local/national) policies or programs are in place for gender mainstreaming in the fisheries sector and towards women's empowerment?
- Where gender trainings or gender awareness campaigns have been conducted – has the training changed in any way how government officers interact with fishing communities? Are they more gender aware? Please provide some examples.
- Etc.

## **4. Knowledge Sharing and Advocacy**

RFLP has organized national and regional meetings relevant to gender, like gender awareness campaigns in Sri Lanka and Philippines, and in other international fora, like the Gender Fisheries Symposium organized by the Asian Fisheries Society, among others. Other important documents and information on events are available in the RFLP website, for example:

- The RFLP field manual for gender mainstreaming in the fisheries sector<sup>4</sup>, designed by RFLP to facilitate gender analysis and project planning in fisheries development projects among fisheries development practitioners. The intention of the handbook was to facilitate the integration of gender issues into the project cycle, by providing information on concepts and definitions, as well as tools to undertake gender analysis in fisheries sector projects. RFLP has funded translation of the manual into Vietnamese and FAO RAP is currently also translating it into Thai language.

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<sup>4</sup> Mainstreaming Gender into Project Cycle Management in the Fisheries Sector (Arenas, M.C., and Lentisco, A.).

- Workshop on Best practices for Gender Mainstreaming in the Fisheries Sector, Siem Reap, Cambodia 2-5 November 2010, organized by RFLP with the specific purpose of field testing and obtaining feedback on gender analysis tools included in the RFLP gender handbook (mentioned above) and to provide recommendations of best practices for gender mainstreaming in the fisheries sector. The workshop also examined policies that were relevant to gender mainstreaming in the fisheries sector. The workshop noted that only Cambodia had its own Gender Mainstreaming Policy for the Fisheries Sector, while the other countries rely on policies for other sectors, being relevant to the fisheries sector with appropriate institutional support<sup>5</sup>.
- Participation in the Asian Fisheries Society International Symposium on Gender and Fisheries. RFLP has helped facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences on gender issues in fisheries by supporting the attendance of participants (3 women and 2 men) from the RFLP Regional Office, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines to the 3rd Global Symposium on Gender and Fisheries (3GAF)<sup>6</sup> in Shanghai, China 21 to 23 of April 2011. During the Symposium the participants were able to discuss a wide range of issues relating to gender in fisheries. The article presented by the Regional Office on gender mainstreaming strategies and tools in fisheries development projects will soon be available in the AFS Special Journal<sup>7</sup>, as well as two other papers of Viet Nam and Philippines.
- At the beginning of 2012 the RFLP carried out the first “Women in Fisheries Award”<sup>8</sup>. The purpose of this Award was to highlight the activities conducted during two years of RFLP activity implementation and to share the impact, results obtained and lessons learned across countries on gender equality and women’s empowerment. This was arranged during the third RFLP PSC meeting in Manila, February 2012. The Philippines was awarded the first place, for their short movie on “From Gambling to Earning”, featuring La Concepcion Women’s Association of Zamboanga del Norte. La Concepcion’s underwear sewing project was recognized because of its impact on the lives and livelihoods of the rural women in the coastal community which is always at the mercy of the weather—locking fishers, income-less, in their homes from December to February. Thanks to the training and assistance package provided by RFLP (which included business training, sewing machines, sewing kits, textiles, accessories and other production materials) these women were now enjoying increased incomes. The runner up place was awarded to the presentation by the RFLP team from Timor-Leste. Their presentation featured first an overall view of how they were promoting gender equality by promoting sustainable fisheries resource management: by (i) by improving the participation of women in decision-making, ii) by enhancing the capacity of female data managers, iii) by enhancing the capacity of the post harvest livelihoods trainer and iv) by working towards improved livelihoods among small-scale fishing communities, through improved processing techniques. Their presentation finalized with a short film showing how one woman trained by

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<sup>5</sup> For a copy of the workshop report, visit the RFLP website: [http://www.rflp.org/mainstreaming\\_gender/](http://www.rflp.org/mainstreaming_gender/)

<sup>6</sup> The presentations of the RFLP funded participants can be downloaded here:

[http://www.rflp.org/gender\\_symposium\\_shanghai](http://www.rflp.org/gender_symposium_shanghai)

<sup>7</sup> *On gender mainstreaming strategies and tools in fisheries development projects: RFLP gender strategy and lessons from Asia-Pacific Region*, (Lentisco. A. & Alonso. E.). Forthcoming 2012, Asian Fisheries Society Journal

<sup>8</sup> All the competing videos of the RFLP countries are available at <http://www.rflp.org/gender>

RFLP to process fish balls, had successfully put her skills to use to boost her family income.

## **F. Achievements and Lessons Learned**

After two and a half years of implementation, the project is starting to generate a number of achievements and lessons learned. Some of these were discussed during May 2012, in a regional workshop held by the RFLP to discuss programme implementation lessons learned, including successes and challenges that the teams had found when implementing the RFLP gender strategy. A summary of RFLP achievements to date and lessons learned is provided in this section

### **Gender analysis and other gender studies**

To document the achievements towards the promotion of gender equality, a gender impact assessment should be conducted in the participating countries. Ideally, this should be used to contrast with the initial gender analysis information from the baseline surveys. However, as countries teams were not fully satisfied with the results of the gender analysis done as part of their baseline surveys, some countries have and are carrying out complementary gender related studies. Sri Lanka, for example, recently undertook a complementary gender analysis (see the gender analysis section above. It is also available in the RFLP website).

RFLP Timor-Leste is planning to undertake a national survey on gender roles in fishing communities. This study will provide valuable information on migration patterns and gender roles in Timorese fishing communities. The study will be conducted using an experimental method, under the supervision of a post-doctoral social anthropologist. The data gathering process will be carried out by the staff of the NDFA as part of the capacity building in data gathering and data management for the national staff. The staff will be taking geo-referenced photographs and will fill up a simple questionnaire with basic information about the people photographed. This information will be directly entered in the [www.peskador.org](http://www.peskador.org) interface by the district staff and then it will be publicly available. The sample will be divided by gender and generation. Historical patterns of migrations will also be drawn. The result of the study will be an inventory of gender roles and livelihoods. The results will include:

- A document with details of the experimental methodology;
- A set of maps; and,
- A policy brief.

Other RFLP countries are starting the process of undertaking a gender assessment of the RFLP impact, looking at the effects of RFLP interventions at household level, dealing with the double burden and will provide concrete examples of women's empowerment as a result of project interventions. The results of these studies will be available in the website once finalized.

*Gender analysis related studies should be carried out as part of project implementation. Projects should undertake gender analysis during initial (design and inception) phases of the project, ideally during the stakeholder analysis, and as part of baseline surveys that provide information of the local context, gender roles and relations, and indicating areas that need greater attention. Once this is done, project teams can develop gender sensitive indicators, to*

*monitor the gender impact of the project during the implementation. At the final stages of the intervention, there is a need to carry out gender impact assessments that evaluate the gender related impact of the project, to identify if the project has contributed to women's empowerment (for example, by participating more actively in decision-making), if there have been any changes in gender roles and/or relations, (for example, women doing activities that were once considered male only, and vice versa), and/or if the project has had any negative effects (for example, by having an increase of domestic violence or women are facing double burden issues).*

### **About the effectiveness of the gender trainings**

Despite the number of gender trainings carried out in RFLP countries, it appears that there is still a degree of confusion on what gender mainstreaming means, and how gender concerns can be effectively incorporated during country planning and implementation. During consultations with country teams and also by observations done by the MTE team, the effectiveness of gender trainings carried out at community level (e.g. Viet Nam) was questioned, mainly due to the fact that only one day was spent in this particular province and that it was a commune where no gender training had been conducted. Where gender training was conducted in Viet Nam, despite the novelty of the training (in Viet Nam, it was the first time Women's Union's carried out gender training with both men and women from fishing communities attending) and their enjoyable nature (in Viet Nam too, fishers declared the gender training was "fun"), the impact of these trainings at household or community level was questionable. However, the trainings were, even more importantly, an opportunity for meso-level actors to be aware of "gender perceptions" and "gender stereotypes in the fisheries sector". In the Vietnamese example, it is expected that Women's Union and DARD officials, through their participation in the TOT gender training, will be now more sensitive to gender issues in fishing communities and will be better prepared to deal with gender issues during their routine work in the fisheries sector, including the implementation of other government programmes. This potential change should be followed up in the near future.

*Changes in attitudes and mindsets take time and need more attention than that provided by a single gender training course. It was considered by some project staff that trainings directly to community members, although relevant (needing the involvement of men as well as women), may take too much time and resources than a fisheries livelihoods development project is able to commit. In any case, gender sensitization trainings/workshops appear extremely important, and especially for government staff and other stakeholders (meso-level actors) who are in direct contact with fishing communities on a daily basis. They are the ones who will be responsible for the continuation of gender mainstreaming work after a development project ends – it is important for them to understand and buy-in to gender equality principles and to follow them when providing services to the communities. Being sensitive to the issues is the first step to being more inclusive when implementing development interventions.*

### **Improving women's participation in co-management and decision-making**

RFLP has made/is making efforts to increase the participation of women in decision-making, including their participation in co-management mechanisms, taking various roles in fisheries management interventions.

In the Philippines, the RFLP has integrated gender into Coastal Resource and Fisheries Management Plans (CRFM) of the local government units (LGUs). As a result, women will be acting as fish wardens and fishery law enforcers. RFLP is also working with the communities to establish a women managed MPA.

In Sri Lanka, the inclusion of women representatives in co-management coordination committees has been made compulsory, as well as the inclusion of a minimum of 2 women directors in the Fish Finance Network Association. As mentioned above, thanks to RFLP support and advocacy, the Sri Lankan government is revising the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act No. 2 of 1996 to allow women to become legal members of Fisheries Committees. This will be an unprecedented achievement towards gender equality for the Sri Lankan fisheries sector.

In Timor-Leste, a significant accomplishment has been obtained by having, for the first time ever, women as signatories of the first documented *Tara Bandu*, a traditional coastal resources management practice. Local authorities and communities were informed of the need to involve women in resource management, and agreed to RFLP's request to including women as signatories of the *Tara Bandu* document. This means that women now have a role in the formalization of the traditional and community based resource management system; a domain that was banned to them before RFLP intervention. As signatories, they will have to participate in all decision meetings. Despite this important achievement, the RFLP will need to follow up the impact of the initiative - acting as signatories does not automatically mean that they will have power of decision over the restrictions posed by the *Tara Bandu*. Regardless, is an important first step, which gives women a role in formalization of the regulation and access to the public sphere. Symbolic changes like this should be promoted, by seeking replication in other districts.

In Viet Nam, RFLP is supporting a total of 16 Fisheries Associations (FAs) in Quang Nam, Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue provinces. The FAs are community-based organizations for mainly male fishers – of the 1,335 members, only 36 are women. In Viet Nam, it is normal that men represent their household in most registrations. The local authorities argument was that even though women's names do not appear in FA, they are considered FA members. RFLP is working to increase women's FA membership and to encourage their active participation, through an incentive scheme that includes: i) provision of assistance for livelihoods model implementation to only women that are FA members, and ii) by specifying that the membership fee is per household, rather than for an individual – this means that when both a husband and wife are members, they only need to pay one fee.

*RFLP is applying efforts to increase and enhance women's participation in decision-making, including in fisheries co-management structures that were traditionally dominated by men. To be recognized for the first time as members and signatories of fisheries organizations is not only a symbolic achievement; it should be considered a first step towards gender equality in the sector. The ways to do this may not appear obvious at the beginning, and the process can be time consuming, but the results achieved may well go beyond the lifetime of the intervention. In the case mentioned above of Sri Lanka, the current law excludes women from fisheries committees (as explained, because only men were fishers, and only fishers can be members). A way around this was to improve women's participation on the co-management coordinating committee, enabling their participation in decision-making. This process has raised the awareness of government officers, which is ultimately leading to a discussion at government level for the revision of the law and the possible inclusion of women in fisheries*

*committees for the first time. In other instances where the law is not directly exclusive, it might be necessary to apply incentives to facilitate the participation of more women – in the example of Viet Nam, by obtaining one fee per household only and using the Fisheries Association as a filter for involvement in other activities. This gives a win-win situation with first, greater participation of women in decision-making bodies, and second, greater diversity of activities that the FA is involved with, ensuring their sustained existence as community based organizations.*

*Projects should monitor the achievements, document the processes and results, and share the information so they can be replicated in other areas and by other projects.*

### **Being aware of potential negative effects: The risks of overburden and domestic violence**

Despite the number of activities that are directed to increase women's participation in decision-making and in income generating activities, project staff have expressed their concern about the potential risk that the project could have in the communities, and especially on the women they are trying to help.

For example, Cambodia staff stated that the greater involvement of women in more activities could increase their workload, as women still have to attend to household work. After attending trainings on gender, men were reported to be helping out more with household chores, but only in a minor way. Household violence was also a concern, despite the number of training courses and dissemination workshops conducted (not only by the RFLP). Philippine staff expressed similar concerns, indicating that efforts should be employed to sensitize male fishers in order to avoid women's double burden.

In Timor-Leste, where specific TOT training to women's staff in the NDFA has made them very valuable contributors and indispensable in their department, there is also a risk that they become *multi-task* workers instead of *specialized* workers, with again the possibility of overburden. As a response to this risk, RFLP is promoting specialization and division of labour in the Fisheries Department, and instigating an approach that promotes meritocracy (promotion based on merits), by providing capacity building to those staff whose performance is better and by giving special focus to women staff.

A positive example is worth mentioning in the case of Viet Nam, where it has been reported that, due to declining catches and the RFLP supported livelihoods diversification activities involving women, male fishers were willing to spend more time helping with traditionally "women's" activities", like pig and chicken raising. Men were also reported to be starting to support women with their household chores, so that they (the women) could dedicate more time to income generating activities.

*The project should be aware of the risks of overburden and/or even of domestic violence if there is resistance to change of traditional gender norms by men. Through sensitization and specialization approaches, men and women should be included in the development process, and both will see the benefits of supporting roles.*

## **Drawing the limit – how far can the RFLP go?**

Overall, activities have been carried out with a focus on the practical needs<sup>9</sup> of women and men (e.g. increases in their income, facilitating their access to productive assets, etc.), and as much as possible by giving attention to their strategic needs<sup>10</sup> (which has largely been based on increasing women's participation in decision making, by facilitating and promoting their participation in co-management mechanisms). But as part of its gender strategy, the RFLP has also had to set limits on how much it can do related to gender. It is important to mention that the RFLP is not a gender project – instead, it is a project that is mainstreaming gender during its implementation. A variety of concerns were encountered that were outside the ability of country project teams to deal with (e.g. issues of domestic violence, overburden, etc). Some of these issues need the attention of other specialized government departments or NGOs that are better able to handle them. For gender related training courses, the intention was not for all project staff to become gender experts, but rather, to sensitize project staff to gender issues, so that they could identify them, and adapt their interventions to the local needs and context. When there was a need for more sophisticated gender expertise input, this was made available at country level on an *ad-hoc* basis.

*It is recommended that country teams build partnerships with local NGO's and government departments that lead and specialize in women's empowerment and gender equality efforts. Being realistic, a development program needs to set certain limits on gender activities, so that other programme activities do not suffer. Gender concerns have to be taken into account, in order to make the programme more fair and effective, but without losing sight of the overall goal of the intervention. The RFLP is not by design a gender programme, it is rather a fisheries livelihoods programme that has mainstreamed gender in its design and implementation.*

## **About the establishment of quotas and being flexible as way to foster women's participation**

The RFLP mid-term evaluation review team criticized the setting of targets for women saying that “the number and proportion of women attending any project activity” had become “the indicator for gender mainstreaming within RFLP” and that, “This is problematic [...] ensuring the participation of an assured proportion of women in a project activity is not often in [project staff] hands; [...] as they cannot really take responsibility for their attendance, given the complex socio-economic context in different communities”.

The concerns of the MTE were also shared by some project implementers, however, as highlighted in this report, the setting of quotas is not the only RFLP approach to gender mainstreaming, as many other specific indicators have been set in country log-frames (as seen above). In fact, setting targets should be seen as the last resort, and other strategies being implemented first. During a workshop in Bangkok, country teams discussed the pros and cons of setting targets for women's participation in RFLP activities. The group indicated that setting quotas could be an early step towards mainstreaming gender, guaranteeing the participation of both men and women in some project activities where women might not have previously been involved otherwise. The teams concluded that setting quotas was a normal

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<sup>9</sup> Practical needs: those intended to improve quality of life. They target people's basic needs.

<sup>10</sup> Strategic needs: those related to questions of gender equality between men and women in a given society.

practice in the development process in developing countries; and it can be good to use quotas to set minimum targets for some governance structures, and especially by fostering women's participation in decision-making. However, it was also agreed that each activity should be designed according to the specific needs and conditions of men and women, so that there were activities that were more suited to one group than another. The quota system may reduce motivation/willingness/interest levels if training and meetings were not relevant to the specific needs and might therefore reduce activity impact. As explained above, looking just at numbers of women and men participating in project activities gave no indication of the quality of their involvement in any activity, meaning that efforts for fair participation must go beyond numbers. The group also agreed that in co-management and other decision making structures, setting quotas or reserving seats for women's participation was a good practice, as otherwise women would likely be excluded from decision-making.

It is also worth noting that in some cases, activities have been more effective when women also participated, even if the activities were not considered to be suited for women – for example, in the Safety at Sea training in Sri Lanka. It was initially thought that their participation in this type of training was unnecessary because women did not go to sea to fish. However, women were invited to join the training, and thereafter actively encouraged safer behaviour of fishers by getting their husbands, fathers and sons to take sea safety gear when going to sea, maximizing the impact of the training, and fostering a safety culture in the fishing community.

Finally, setting quotas for the participation of men and women in project activities, may not guarantee their participation (despite the nature of the activity). A clear example was documented in Indonesia, during December 2010, when women failed to attend seaweed training despite having been invited. While the practical training was conducted near their village, the theoretical part of the training was conducted in another village which required sleeping overnight, and the women were unable to sleep away from their households. Mobility can be an issue for the participation of women, either because it is socially unacceptable, or because women have other household responsibilities, like child care. These limitations can also be recorded during the initial gender analysis, allowing design of more appropriate interventions.

*The establishment of quotas is an “easy” option for project staff, as they can provide “easy to follow” guidance to service providers during beneficiary selection, and especially in cases where a thorough gender analysis has not been conducted. However, this should be as a last resort. A proper gender analysis will reveal what activities are more sensitive to women's needs and which ones are more related to men's (see the discussion below on “challenging traditional roles”). It is advised however, that the project should not exclude the participation of women or men from any activity based on gender stereotypes. It is also worth mentioning that some activities may also be more effective when both men and women are involved, like the above Sri Lankan example. Mobility issues must also be taken into account and activities should be planned close to the village and if needed, child care provided to allow women with young children to attend.*

### **Challenge traditional roles**

The “appropriateness” of activities that challenge what are traditional roles of men or women also needs consideration. Was it “appropriate” for a fisheries project to challenge



traditional gender stereotypes? There was a degree of concern from some project implementers that by challenging traditional roles, the project might be seen as disrespectful to traditions, culture and religion, giving “social headaches” that might have repercussions beyond the project. This concern, however, is/was very context specific. Overall project staff considered that changing mind-sets was good because traditions and cultural value change over time, and change was inevitable and should be encouraged. Changes in roles should not only be promoted for women, but also for men, who need to be involved in the process towards gender equality. If they are not involved, they may oppose and resist the process. By challenging traditional roles, women can be more empowered, through fairer and more balanced decision-making processes in communities, but to effectively achieve this, men have to be full partners in the process.

*RFLP needs to be aware and sensitive to traditional gender roles, however, opportunities for empowerment of women should be sought, including changes in roles with new activities for women (e.g. fish wardens in the Philippines), and the support of men (e.g. by providing greater support in the household activities, which was reported to be already happening in Viet Nam and Cambodia). For other projects, it is worth mentioning that during the planning phase, activities should be designed to respond to the specific needs of women and men, and that both, men and women, should be involved as they may do different, but complementary, tasks.*

## **Gender and Sex-disaggregated data at national levels**

As a normal practice, the RFLP collects data of men and women participating in project activities. However, at national levels, gender or sex-disaggregated data indicating the roles of men and women in the fisheries sector were generally not collected by government departments. RFLP notes that more attention and support should be given at national levels to gather this type of data, including socio-economic information, in order to have a clearer picture of the contributions of both men and women to the sector, including their roles and their participation in decision-making. The data should provide detailed information on migration patterns and seasonal roles in productive tasks. Of special relevance is the study planned by RFLP in Timor-Leste to develop a survey of gender roles in fisheries that will be available in the National online Fisheries Database. This will be the first time that Timor-Leste has undertaken such a study, and other countries could follow their example.

*There should be collaboration between the Department of Census and Statistics and the Fisheries Department to start collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender division of roles in the fisheries sector.*

## **G. Recommendations and Exit Strategy**

### **1. Recommendations**

Based on the lessons learned to date described above during the implementation of the RFLP gender mainstreaming strategy, the RFLP provides the following recommendations:

- Recognize that women also play an important role in the fisheries sector; they are important stakeholders that need to fully participate in the fisheries

development intervention (as with any other type of development intervention).

- Carry out participatory gender analysis at the initial phases of the design of the project (ideally during stakeholder selection), in order to design and implement interventions that respond to the local context, taking into account practical and strategic needs of women and men, gender roles and relations, as well as potential limitations of mobility, seasonality, migration, etc.
- Do not fall into western stereotypes, gender analysis will describe what the gender roles are in the community in question – do not take them for granted.
- Be aware of policies, laws and regulations that could prevent the full participation of women in the development process, including co-management bodies, fisheries laws, land tenure, etc. and flag those limitations to the government department responsible to change them.
- No matter the type of intervention, ask the questions: what is the likely impact of this activity on men and women? Can they both be involved in participation? What is the best hour for them to attend? Are they allowed to bring their children with them? Are there any limitations (mobility, social norms, household responsibilities, etc.) that may hinder their participation?
- Carry out gender trainings/sensitization workshops for project staff, government staff and other relevant stakeholders in order to enhance their knowledge and to involve them in the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy.
- Improve the participation of women in decision-making, if necessary by setting quotas/reserving seats, and by making them signatories of relevant management documentation, and using participation incentives. If there is opposition, use sensitization seminars to explain the importance of gender equality principles.
- Set gender related targets, and follow up through gender sensitive indicators during monitoring and evaluation.
- Be aware of potential negative effects, like overburden and domestic violence.
- Liaise with other government departments/NGOs in charge of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Bring in gender expertise whenever needed, but consider having a network of gender focal points for information sharing and advocacy purposes.
- Gather sex-disaggregated data for every activity and keep a record on the number of men and women participating in meetings and project activities.
- Encourage fisheries departments to collect information on the gender roles of the fisheries sector.
- At the end of the project, carry out a gender impact assessment to evaluate the gender related impact of the project.
- Document the information and share through the appropriate channels.

## 2. Exit Strategy

RFLP is currently preparing an exit strategy for discussion at the upcoming Programme Steering Committee meeting tentatively scheduled for November 2012. Gender aspects will be incorporated into the exit strategy of each country.



The main gender recommendations for inclusion in the exit strategy are:

- To carry out **gender impact assessments**. Information on how to conduct these assessments was provided in a previous chapter. The M&E officers should be able to undertake gender monitoring assessment as part of their routine M&E work, but external support should be engaged when necessary.
- To **share knowledge** obtained through the gender impact assessments and overall achievements through the appropriate channels. Case studies should be compiled and prepared for dissemination, involving examples of the process and steps towards gender equality and women's empowerment. These case studies should include details of the process, indicating successes, failures and the challenges. If negative impacts are also found, then the case studies should contain information on the risks, and provide policy recommendations for mitigation and future interventions in the area.
- To **find synergies through partnerships**. Synergies should be found with the initiatives that have been started with collaborating partners (Government Departments, NGOs, etc.), in order to find ensure buy-in, continuity and sustainability of on-going work, before the project ends.
- To **follow up** the implementation of the exit strategy, making sure that is in line with the concerns of gender equity and equality, minimizing the risks that could be derived from the intervention. If possible, an ex-post RFLP gender evaluation should be done two years after RFLP closes to better assess the impact on gender roles and relations that RFLP had in its target fisher communities, and how its advocacy work has influenced the government departments where it has operated.

## H. Annex I - Terms of Reference – national gender focal point Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (RFLP)

### Introduction

Addressing gender is a crosscutting priority for the RFLP, as it is considered a key issue for the improvement of livelihoods and the reduction of vulnerability in fishing communities. To further enhance its efforts, the RFLP has created a system of Gender Focal Points (GFP) to improve gender mainstreaming at both country and regional level.

The main task of the GFP is to support gender mainstreaming in the substantive work programme for RFLP. These GFP are voluntary positions that are carried out by programme staff. The GFPs may have some experience in promoting gender; however, they are not necessarily specialists. The GFPs can seek/request support from gender specialist consultants or external resources and can be provided with opportunities to enhance their capacity when deemed necessary with the approval of the RFLP regional and/or country.

Knowledge sharing and capacity development is part of the work of the GFP. The GFP will be a key resource person for overlooking gender mainstreaming within RFLP implementation in their respective country.

### Main duties and responsibilities

In liaison and supported by the RFLP Regional Office, the GFP will carry out the following tasks:

1. Gender mainstreaming advocacy and strategy
  - Advocate for the inclusion of gender issues in RFLP activity implementation, as well as being aware of gender issues relevant to programme activities.
  - Facilitate/coordinate the development and/or implementation of a **gender mainstreaming strategy** for the RFLP country office and all RFLP activities conducted in-country including planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting.
  - Provide required support for the development of gender sensitive policies and gender strategic programs, especially to government counterparts.
  - Liaise with the Gender Focal Point from the National Fisheries Administration and relevant government agencies (when applicable).
  
2. Knowledge Sharing and Dissemination of Information
  - Follow up gender related impact during the implementation of activities, and especially during monitoring and evaluation, ensuring the collection and reporting of sex disaggregated data.
  - Contribute to the distribution of, and discussion on gender related information with programme stakeholders, and especially government counterparts.
  - Encourage discussion and debate on gender dimensions at country office meetings with stakeholders, other agencies and NGOs in order to design RFLP activities and implementation strategies which will maximize benefits to both women and men.

- Create and/or maintain a gender information repository (information package) in the office and a resource-base of gender specialists/external resources with relevant competencies in the area of gender work as necessary.
- Share information and experiences including good and bad practice examples of gender mainstreaming with the Gender Forum/Network.
- Represent RFLP at respective country workshops, seminars and events where information on RFLP gender mainstreaming is required, on the request of the RFLP country and/or RFLP regional office.
- Submit articles highlighting positive programme gender experiences through the National Programme Coordinator (NPC)/National Project Manager (NPM) to the RFLP regional office (the APO and IO), for inclusion on the RFLP website (www.rflp.org).

### 3. Capacity Development

- Identify the needs and gaps of colleagues for information and training on similar events on gender mainstreaming and obtain and share relevant documents and materials.
- Give recommendations to the NPC/NPM on gender training or similar events that could benefit different stakeholder groups e.g. local government and NGO staff, members of fisher groups and fisher and coastal community members.
- Provide support in the organization of capacity building for the RFLP country office on gender concepts, gender analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Encourage staff to routinely raise and to discuss gender equality issues in the field and in the work place and the likely impacts on RFLP activities.

### 4. Reporting and M&E

- Prepare gender related inputs for the six-month reports, including the disaggregation of all M&E data by sex and the special reports as needed.
- Identify change stories, case studies, research themes, etc., that can be further explored by the appropriate agencies/individuals (international/national consultancies, research institutions, NGOs, other UN organizations, etc) on gender and fisheries in areas of RFLP geographic coverage.
- Assist in the development of indicators for assessing progress with gender mainstreaming.
- Monitor progress and achievement against existing RFLP gender indicators.

### **Qualifications and experience**

- Basic knowledge and understanding of gender concepts, approaches and methodologies.
- Team worker and networking ability.
- Strong communication skills, including writing skills and public speaking.
- Analytical capacity and critical thinking.
- Working experience/involvement in gender promotion and related gender issues is an advantage.
- Willingness to strengthen her/his own capacity in gender.
- Readiness to carry out do her/his job effectively and allocate her/his time to the tasks as required.

