

Project Evaluation Series

Evaluation of the project “Creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries”

Project code: GCP/GLO/965/SWE

Annex 3. Stakeholder empowerment and the SSF-GSF in Africa

Contents

Abbreviations and acronyms	iii
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Evaluation background and methodology	1
1.2 Limitations	4
1.3 Background on the SSF-GSF and the role of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries.....	4
2. Evaluation questions	9
2.1 Design	9
2.2 Results.....	9
2.3 Social inclusion, equity, and gender.....	15
2.4 Partnerships	15
2.5 Potential sustainability and impact.....	17
2.6 Project Management and FAO's role.....	18
3. Pointers for consideration and lessons learned.....	20
References	23
Appendix 1. People interviewed.....	25
Appendix 2. Members of the Regional Advisory Groups.....	28

Abbreviations and acronyms

AG	Advisory Group (global)
AU-IBAR	Africa Union-Interafrican Bureau of Aquatic Resources
AWFISHNET	African Women Fish Traders and Processors Network
CAOPA	<i>Confédération Africaine des Organisations de Pêche Artisanale</i>
COFI	Committee on Fisheries
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IPC WG	International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty Working Group
KSP	Knowledge Sharing Platform
RAG	Regional Advisory Group
REFEPAS	Réseau des femmes de la pêche artisanale du Sénégal
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSF	Small-scale fisheries
SSF-GSF	Global Strategic Framework for Small-Scale Fisheries development programme and knowledge interface of the Stockholm
SwedBio	Resilience Centre

1. Introduction

1.1 Evaluation background and methodology

1. Background: The FAO-SIDA small-scale fisheries (SSF) project “creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries” (GCP/GLO/965/SWE) is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in close collaboration and coordination with various partners. The evaluation looked at the project as a whole but used case studies to have a closer look at two countries (Philippines and Oman) to assess the evaluation questions at country level. The third case-study focuses on the empowerment of the targeted SSF stakeholders and organizations, including governments, with particular attention to the global and regional structures for their engagement (Global Strategic Framework for Small-Scale Fisheries [SSF-GSF]). It focuses in particular on Africa, as this is the largest project geographic area, and where SSF organizations are most numerous. This document presents the third case study.
2. Overall project objective: According to the project logical framework (Appendix E of overall evaluation report), the FAO-SIDA SSF project has the following overall specific objective: “Improved policy, legal and institutional frameworks in selected regions and countries and at the global level have facilitated the social, economic and environmental transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector needed for enhancing its contribution to food security and poverty eradication”.
3. Expected outcomes: The FAO-SIDA SSF project is built around the following four outcomes. The empowerment of SSF stakeholders and their organizations is encompassed more specifically under outcomes 3 (output 3.1 on capacity development of SSF organizations to engage in global SSF governance) and 4 (outcome 4.1 on support to the SSF-GSF).

Outcome 1: Awareness is raised

Focus of main activities: Development of SSF webpage and other knowledge products, events and outreach efforts. Special global awareness-raising efforts for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022.

Outcome 2: The science-policy interface is strengthened

Focus of main activities: Sharing of knowledge and supporting regional and local policy reform (Illuminating Hidden Harvests [IHH]), data collection methods, specific country interventions, and National Plan of Action (NPOA) development, support to regional policies and organizations.

Outcome 3: Stakeholders are empowered

Focus of main activities: Capacity development of SSF actors and organizations, as well as government actors and institutional strengthening.

Outcome 4: Implementation is supported

Focus of main activities: Monitoring and management of the project and the SSF-GSF.

4. Methodology and structure of the report: The case study analysis was based on the review of documentation (see references/bibliography section) and stakeholder interviews to gather information. The stakeholders selected for key informant interviews (i.e. SSF national and regional stakeholder organizations in Africa - the geographic focus of this case study

– and Asia) were common to those interviewed for the overall evaluation (see Appendix 1). These interviews sought to evidence the extent to which SSF organizations at lower levels of governance and in countries are participating and represented in high-level strategic frameworks and actions, such as the active arms/structures of the SSF-GSF (see background section 1.3). Reciprocally, interviews with constituent members of the SSF-GSF and secretariat sought to assess the functionality of the SSF-GSF structures, notably in promoting linkages among SSF organizations, harnessing political support and enabling the SSF cause and the voices of small-scale fishers and fishworkers to be put forward in both global and national agendas. Attention was paid to understanding what form of organizational support (from the project) may be most effective and impactful in strengthening the capacity of SSF organizations and the extent to which SSF organizations and social movements/civil society organization are benefiting from this. The case study analysis was driven by the over-arching question: *to what extent have project activities, and in particular those undertaken by the structures of the SSF-GSF, enabled the creation of vertical linkages and meaningful engagement of SSF stakeholders and organizations, and to what extent is this contributing to their empowerment?*

5. The case study delves in the empowerment of non-state actor (NSA) SSF organizations in general (as per output 3.1) and examines the functioning of the SSF-GSF as a whole, including its structures (as per output 4.1). Given that some of the structures of the SSF-GSF are intended to provide a space for the coordination of SSF organizations' actions, there is some inevitable overlap in the treatment of these two aspects of the analysis. Information gathered was triangulated across sources and respondents (only the same information provided by at least two respondents, or at least a respondent and another source (e.g. e-survey) was used in the case study analysis). Based on this, findings and considerations for the future were elaborated. The case study report presents the findings according to the six main evaluation questions included in the evaluation matrix (Appendix A to the overall evaluation report), although these are specifically contextualized to the topic of the case study. The case study is not an evaluation of the SSF-GSF per se, but supports the overall evaluation and the findings presented in the overall report. Although no conclusions or recommendations as such are elaborated, the report contains some pointers for consideration.
6. It is important to clarify here that "SSF organizations" encompass a range of different actors and organizations whose mandate and members are not quite the same, even though they all have the interests and welfare of small-scale fishers and sustainability of SSF at heart. Without going into too much detail, Table 1 illustrates the complexity of who speaks for SSF actors, and with what legitimacy. It is important to distinguish professional associations representing the interests of small-scale fishers and fishworkers (e.g. *Confédération Africaine des Organisations de Pêche Artisanale* (CAOPA) at regional level, *Fédération Nationale des GIE Pêche du Sénégal* at national level) from civil society organizations/social movements who advocate for and defend the interests of small-scale fishers and fishworkers at either global/regional (e.g. WFF, WFFP, the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers [ICSF]) level or national level (e.g. Masifundise¹ in South Africa, *Réseau des femmes de la pêche artisanale du Sénégal* – REFEPAS, in Senegal). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – in particular environmental NGO (e-NGO) – are a separate group of stakeholders, whose interests tend to be perceived as different from

¹ <https://www.masifundise.org/>

those of SSF social movements/civil society organizations and SSF professional organizations, even if there is an overlap in missions. In the rest of the text, the term “non-state actor” (NSA) is generic and not restrictively referring to the African platform of non-state fisheries actors (see section 2.4).

Table 1. Broad nomenclature of SSF organizations

NON-STATE					
		Broad membership			
	Examples	SSF professional producers' associations	Civil society organizations or NGOs	Individual fishers or fish workers	Other
A organization, collective or social movement representing the interests and rights of small-scale fishers and fishworkers at global or national level	<i>Global:</i> ICSF, WFF, WFFP <i>National:</i> Masifundise (South Africa), <i>Réseau des femmes de la pêche artisanale du Sénégal</i> (REFEPAS)		✓	✓	
An association or federation of professional fishers and/or fishworkers – regional, national or local	CAOPA, <i>Fédération Nationale des GIE Pêche du Sénégal</i> (FENAGIE), CLPA (Senegal)	✓			
An international NGO supporting the environment and small-scale fisheries in general	EDF				✓
A national NGO or civil society organization ('supporter' organization supporting the interests of the environment and small-scale fisheries in general)	EMEDEO		✓		✓
A regional platform or network of non-state fisheries actors and organizations	AWFISHNET, AU-IBAR African Continental Non-State Actors Coordination	✓	✓		

	Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture 'AFRIFISH'				
A university or research institute researching fisheries and SSF issues	WorldFish, St Mary's University etc.				✓
STATE					
		Broad membership			
	Examples	Government fisheries authorities			
A Government authority / ministry dealing with fisheries development	Ministries of fisheries	✓			
A Regional inter-governmental Organization addressing fisheries issues	AU, OSPESCA, SEAFDEC	✓			

Source: Elaborated by the evaluation team.

1.2 Limitations

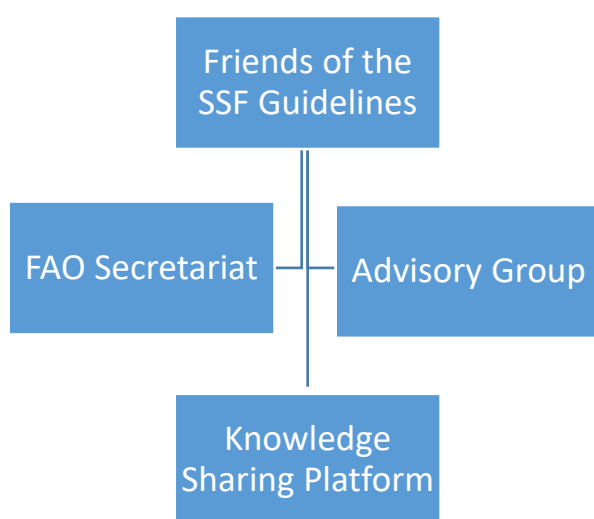
- Time differences and logistical constraints such as internet connectivity were the largest constraints to interview stakeholders virtually, especially those at country or grassroots levels. Thanks to the rescheduling of calls and use of WhatsApp in line with the respondents' preferences and availability, these constraints could be overcome. Not all representatives of SSF organizations in Africa at sub-regional level could be interviewed, due to their high number (the list of people interviewed as part of the case study is provided in Appendix 1). Wherever possible, respondents filling multiple responsibilities were selected, but views collected are limited to those interviewed. Regarding the analysis of project expenditure to assess the extent of project support to the activities supporting SSF organizations, it was not possible to go down to the level of spending per output/type of activity. Although less finely grained, expenditure per outcome was used instead for the analysis.

1.3 Background on the SSF-GSF and the role of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries

- The SSF-GSF is global in nature and a "partnership mechanism that aims for coherent implementation approaches, development of synergies, common advocacy and resource mobilization efforts, as well as experience sharing" (FAO, n.d.). Its functioning is founded on the assumption that the SSF-GSF should act as a conduit through which the voices of non-state SSF organizations at lower levels of governance can be brought up and amplified (bottom-up) and through which global advances in the promotion and recognition of SSF can resonate at national and local levels (top-down). From these two-way and reciprocal vertical linkages should result the empowerment of SSF actors at all levels, including at national and sub-national levels. Figure 1 shows the overall structure of the SSF-GSF.

9. In essence, the SSF-GSF is the way to operationalize Part 3, Chapter 10 of the SSF Guidelines, in particular art. 10.5, 10.6, 10.7 and 10.8, which focus essentially on the mechanism of coordination for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines and on the linkages that this must enable across different levels of governance (from local to global and vice-versa). The proposal for the SSF-GSF was welcome at the 32nd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in 2016 (FAO, 2016; FAO, 2017). The structure of the SSF-GSF includes an Advisory Group (AG) consisting primarily of non-state small-scale fisheries representative organizations, a Friends of the SSF Guidelines group with COFI Member governments participating on a voluntary basis, a Knowledge Sharing Platform (KSP) of other actors and an FAO Secretariat (FAO, 2018a).

Figure 1. Composition of the SSF-GSF



Source: Elaborated by the evaluation team.

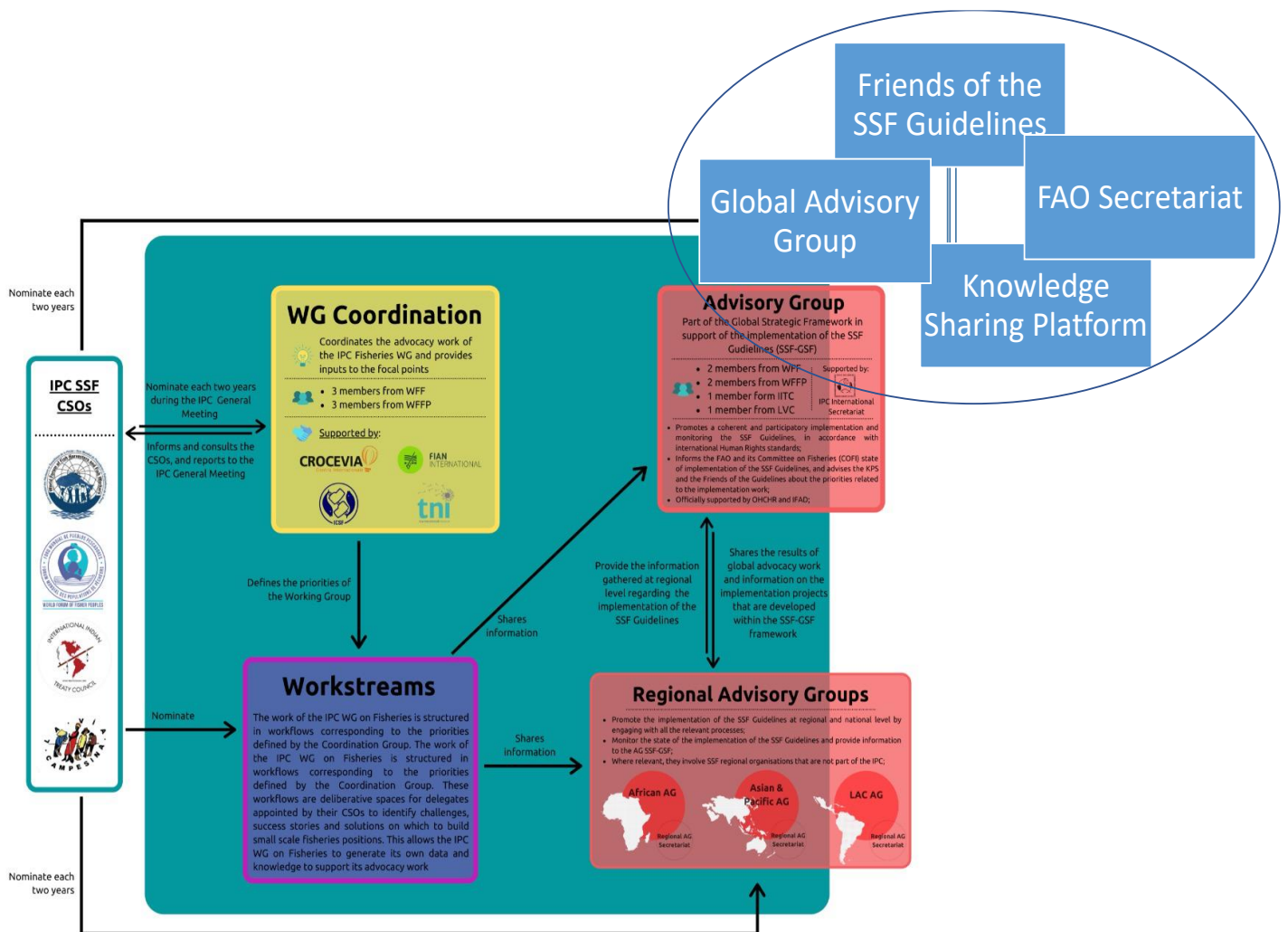
10. Friends of the SSF Guidelines are currently represented by the governments of Indonesia, Peru, Canada, Norway and the United Republic of Tanzania. The KSP, though discussed since the inception of the SSF-GSF, does not yet exist for reasons explained in section 2. FAO (SSF Core Team) acts as secretariat.
11. The AG “consists of representatives from each global small-scale fisheries organization and other relevant organizations in support of small-scale fisheries, indigenous peoples (working directly in the small-scale fisheries sector) and rural workers, and follows criteria of gender and regional balance” (FAO, 2020d). Rights-holders members of the AG are the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF), the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP), the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) and La Via Campesina (LVC). The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are also part of the AG (FAO, 2020b). The importance of regional dimensions in the work of the AG was raised at a meeting in 2019, as part of the group’s strategic discussions on the SSF-GSF (FAO, 2019). This led to in the decision to constitute Regional Advisory Groups (RAG) for Asia, Africa and Latin America, in 2020, following FAO’s traditional regional division (SwedBio, 2020; FAO, 2021a). The RAGs are composed of SSF representatives of global and regional civil society connected to SSF organizations on the concerned continents. They include representatives of Indigenous Peoples and food producers. The terms of the reference of the RAGs are similar to those of the AG (awareness raising, experience sharing and resource mobilization) with the

additional responsibility to advise the AG in support of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines (FAO, 2020e). Strategically, the RAGs are also envisaged as a vector for “strengthening civil society’s voice in the FAO Regional Conferences, where traditionally the IPC has never been able to reach the same degree of political impact than at the global level” (SwedBio, 2020). The RAGs are also seen as the critical link between local issues and global ones (and vice-versa) and as a platform to “facilitate exchanges among social movements in different regions and working at different levels by sharing knowledge and stimulating discussions to formulate clear and shared political positions.” (IPC, 2022). The list of organizations constituting the RAGs are provided in Appendix 2.

12. The IPC, whose secretariat is hosted by Centro Internazionale Crocevia, plays a very special role in the SSF-GSF through the support its Working Group (WG) on Fisheries provides to the AG/RAGs. Crocevia/International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty Working Group (IPC WG) on Fisheries has been the recipient of three letters of agreement (LOAs) under the project to facilitate and support the functioning of the SSF-GSF, and the AG/RAGs more specifically. It is also receiving complementary funding from SIDA channeled through the development programme and knowledge interface of the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SwedBio) to further its work in this regard – some of which was directed to the establishment of the RAGs. The four social movements representing small-scale fishers and fish workers that are part of the AG (WFF, WFFP, IITC and LVC) are also appointed representatives of the IPC WG on Fisheries. Without being a member of the IPC WG on Fisheries, additional support is provided to the IPC WG on Fisheries by the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF).
13. The IPC WG on Fisheries was chosen by FAO as a main recipient of support under project outcomes 3 and 4, to support efforts in relation to capacity development (output 3.1) and the SSF-GSF development (outcome 4.1). Beyond its liaison role between the three RAGs² – facilitated by complementary SwedBio funding, the IPC WG on Fisheries intends to promote “spaces for dialogue and participation” while “Crocevia will mediate to ensure gender balance representation, to avoid the prevalence of hidden powers and to support conflict resolution” (SwedBio, 2020). How the SSF-GSF relates to the set-up and work of the IPC WG on Fisheries is shown in Figure 2.

² The creation of the RAGs was decided in early 2020. However, at the time of writing (July 2022), only the RAG-Asia was operational.

Figure 2. Relationship between the IPC WG on Fisheries and the SSF-GSF



Note: The blue-green box represents the IPC WG on Fisheries.
Source: IPC WG on Fisheries.

2. Evaluation questions

2.1 Design

Evaluation Question 1: In what ways and to what extent does the project design allow for reaching the stated project objective and expected outcomes?

Finding 1. The embedding of the SSF-GSF in the project, with SIDA support channeled through both FAO and SwedBio via the IPC WG on Fisheries, was smart and strategic.

14. The SSF-GSF, although approved in 2016 at the 32nd session of COFI,³ became operational only in 2019 due to issues with the sourcing of funds for coordination. By embedding the SSF-GSF in its design, the project enabled to bridge this gap.
15. Together with other collaborations and partnerships with non-IPC members, the project capitalized on Crocevia/IPC WG on Fisheries to implement project outputs 3.1 and 4.1 in a way that may not have been achieved if FAO alone, as Secretariat of the SSF-GSF had been in charge of this.

2.2 Results

Evaluation Question 2: What have been the advances and most significant changes generated by the project so far?

Outcome 3.1: Capacity development of SSF organizations

Finding 2. There are signs of empowerment of SSF organizations at national level, across the Africa region.

16. There are signs of empowerment of SSF actors at local and national levels. This can be observed in countries with a history of strong organization of small-scale fishers such as Senegal with the local committees for artisanal fisheries (CLPA), networks (e.g. REFEPAS) and national professional federations to which they are closely linked. It can also be observed in countries that have only recently started to organise their SSF sector. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the creation of the Tanzania Women Fishworkers Association (TAWFA) (in 2018, under the NORAD-supported SSF project) and its rapid expansion in 'chapters' around the country thanks to the FAO-SIDA-SSF project, exemplifies the momentum that this representative organization of small-scale fishers and fishworkers is gaining through the widening of its membership. It also illustrates local empowerment and voice of SSF actors in national governance through improved organization. TAWFA has gained recognition at ministerial level. Thus organised, its members were invited to partake in the NPOA formulation process led by the Ministry of Fisheries and they have since been invited in other consultation workshops. The opportunity for women fishworkers to engage in policy and decision-making related to SSF was deemed "impossible without TAWFA because women were too marginalised".
17. There are also examples of project countries where local and national SSF organizations are having a greater stake in project-supported activities, which is reinforcing their role and responsibilities, and thus their power and recognition. For example, in Senegal, where the project has been working with existing fishers' organizations, it has stimulated a new

³ <https://www.fao.org/3/mq654e/mq654e.pdf>

collaboration between CLPA and the Ministry of the Environment to improve the co-management and patrolling of a mangrove protected area, thus increasing responsibility and understanding between both fishers and the government with regards to fishing and mangrove conservation.

Outcome 4.1: Functioning of the SSF-GSF

Advisory Group/Regional Advisory Groups

Finding 3. Building of trust across SSF stakeholders has been the focus of the IPC WG on Fisheries.

18. The functioning of the SSF-GSF, and in particular the AG and RAG, is built on trust. Trust needs to exist among the members of the IPC WG on Fisheries towards i) one another, ii) the IPC WG on Fisheries and its secretariat (hosted by Crocevia), iii) funders, i.e. FAO and SwedBio, and iv) the wider community of NSAs such as academia and environmental NGOs (e-NGO). Trust also needs to exist among other SSF organizations that are not members or not represented by the IPC WG on Fisheries or the AG/RAGs. Although these stakeholders share a common vision for SSF and their respective agendas and priorities are perceived as having evolved in very recent years, there is a fundamental tension between e-NGOs and civil society organizations/social movements. Key informants recognised that social movements should engage with e-NGOs over SSF matters, but that these should not speak on the behalf of small-scale fishers and fishworkers. In late 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, lack of understanding across these actors was evident at a meeting in Penang, Malaysia (WorldFish, 2020; IPC, 2019), held to explore, among other things, the role of the KSP (see further down, finding 5) in increasing the capacity to coordinate and build collective action among multiple SSF actors, despite the space for dialogue that had been created for them at the initiative of WorldFish.
19. The COVID-19 pandemic, which struck in the early stages of the life of the AG of the SSF-GSF, as well as the digitisation of communications and processes at global level, created much hardship at all levels and increased the difficulty of AG/RAG members to engage with one another. Meeting reports and many respondents related that connection issues, time differences and the unfamiliarity with new communication platforms made their interactions very challenging and slowed everything down, all the more so that members had to tend to the impacts of the crisis within their own constituents at national level. This affected the capacity to build a coherent action plan and meant that the efforts of the IPC WG on Fisheries were mainly geared to keeping the AG afloat. The easing of the global sanitary crisis by the end of 2021, and a COFI meeting on the horizon to prepare for, stimulated AG members to more actively engage with one another and work out their plan of action.
20. Pivotal in the rebuilding of trust were a series of webinars on SSF. The 'opportunity' of the virtual space created by the COVID-19 pandemic was used to attempt to rebuild the broken dialogue across multiple SSF partners following the 2019 Penang meeting. Under the initiative of WorldFish, with complementary resources provided by SwedBio, under the facilitation of the IPC WG on Fisheries and the guidance of the AG who designed the agenda, those closed webinars, organised in 2021–2022, brought together all SSF NSA organizations (including e-NGOs, professional organizations and social movements/civil society organizations) to foster understanding of the role of different partners/stakeholders around SSF and the promotion of the SSF Guidelines (see Box 1 for an example of a webinar and the topics it covered).

Box 1. "How to ensure a multi-disciplinary and participatory approach in the implementation of the SSF Guidelines?" A webinar series on the perspectives of small-scale fisheries and fish workers.

Webinar topics:

1. Why the SSF Guidelines: a retrospective on the need for such an international instrument.
2. The human rights-based approach
3. Gender in SSF
4. Climate change and disasters for SSF
5. Small Scale Fishers and the CBD post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Source: IPC WG on Fisheries, SwedBio, WorldFish: webinar recordings links.

21. It was unanimously agreed by all key informants that this process had recreated a dialogue post-Penang, and led the ground for renewed mutual respect and understanding because these webinars created a safe space for participants, especially those from social movements/civil society organizations to speak up about issues that concerned them very deeply. The fact that they were hosted by an organization (SwedBio) seen as neutral also helped. The webinars also spurred more dialogue among e-NGOs who have since been holding bi-weekly meetings (using a "book-club" format) to stimulate reflection on the promotion of human-rights based approaches in SSF. All in all, although this activity was not directly under the project but part of the work by WorldFish and SwedBio, it benefitted the project as it relies on the collaboration and joint action of the various organizations behind SSF to support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

Finding 4. Inclusive decision-making processes are progressing the work of the RAG slowly but surely, with the AG/RAG becoming increasingly active in representing the voices of SSF actors in high-level policy processes and fora. However, in the African context, the linkages between national and regional SSF NSA organizations are weak and there is not yet hard evidence that the RAG (for Africa) is connecting local/national to global levels. As a consequence, the two-way vertical link across all levels is only partial.

22. In early 2020, members of the global AG unanimously decided that regional advisory groups (RAG) would enable to better account for regional specificities and enhance learning. Given the difficult circumstances described above, and even though the establishment of the RAGs has progressed at different speeds, it was agreed by all respondents as a significant achievement. The creation of the RAG was also felt to be an empowering achievement for the members of the RAG themselves.
23. The RAGs have started to influence change in decision-making processes in high-level fora (e.g. RAG-Asia accepted as an observer in the Asia-Pacific Fisheries Commission [APFIC]). Although the AG/RAG cannot as such participate in the sessions of COFI, the IPC Working Group on Fisheries can, thus channelling the views of RAG members. In this regard, the delaying of COFI 34 to 2021 "allowed more time to the members of the RAGs to fully integrate into the IPC process, with several of them taking part in the IPC delegation to COFI and actively participating in the drafting of the IPC positions." (SwedBio, 2020). Thus, at COFI's 34th Session, held virtually, they voiced dissent on the direction of the FAO's work regarding "Blue Transformation", and reminded the Organisation of the importance of implementing its own guidelines (Box 2).

Box 2. COFI 34 statements (by IPC) (<https://www.foodsovereignty.org/ipc-statements-to-cofi34/>) severely criticising the decision to conduct the meeting online, thus precluding participation and voicing of SSF stakeholders, as well as deep concerns about “the promotion of Blue Economy strategies as a means to achieve sustainable use of marine and freshwater resources, and the related expansion of industrial aquaculture, Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), mining, and other developments promoted under the banner of Blue Economy and Blue Growth.” “We therefore call upon COFI Members [...] to put the implementation of SSF guidelines at the center of the Programme of Work.”

24. AG/RAG are striving to be inclusive in their decision-making processes, whereby decisions have to be agreed by all members. This “transformative characteristic” of decision making is seen as “a progressive asset to help take forward the instances of small-scale fishing communities” (SwedBio, 2020). However, while the creation of the RAG was felt by some respondents as giving the option for social movements to “move faster” on SSF issues, and to speed up and strengthen the connection between the local and global levels of SSF governance, in practice, this remains to be fully verified, first and foremost because the AG/RAG are still young and consensual decision-making does take time.
25. In terms of modus operandi, as indicated in the previous section, the RAG-Africa would also benefit from greater visibility to enhance its connecting role between the local/national and regional levels. While on one hand the fact that RAG members work pro-bono on RAG matters and take care of preoccupations within their own SSF organizations (these were particular high during the COVID-19 pandemic) limits their time commitment to the work of the RAG, it also means that they can be the direct channels connecting local/national and regional levels, as was emphasized by one of the RAG members interviewed. In terms of communication, although it was felt that, through their planned future activities, the AG/RAG would be in a good position to help overcome traditionally weak communications across SSF social movements, their own inner communication weaknesses should not be overlooked. Mechanisms for AG/RAG engagement and timely responses to opportunities were described by some respondents as ineffective and as undermining not only the very advisory role of the groups, but broad-based trust building. Agreed upon and more rigorous communication protocols (for example by designing focal points, or establishing information transmission channels) were felt to be needed to facilitate smooth and timely engagement between the RAG, SSF organizations, and FAO and to bridge the gap from national levels to the regional level.
26. In Africa where small-scale fishers’ organizations are the most numerous and can be very powerful, reports of the linkages between local/national SSF NSA organizations and regional SSF organizations (professional or civil society organizations) are sometimes contradictory. For example, lots of consultation was reported to have taken place between CAOPA, national (*Conseil Interprofessionnel de la Pêche Artisanale au Sénégal* - CONIPAS) and sub-national (CLPA) SSF organizations towards the elaboration of actions plans. But it was also felt that local and national SSF organizations (professional or civil society organizations) were not always well represented by regional structures, owing to some power inequalities and dominance in the SSF space. It appears that neither the existing regional or sub-regional African NSA platforms,⁴ nor the RAG-Africa are filling this gap. The insufficient visibility of the RAG-Africa itself and of the regional or sub-regional African NSA platforms, whose existence a large number of key informants were not aware of, or only vaguely, compounded by issues of communication, could be responsible for the weak link

⁴ WANSAFA, EARFISH, North Africa, SANSAFA, PRAPAC, AWFISHNET (see Appendix B of the main report for a map of stakeholders).

between local-national organizations and regional ones. For example (and contrasting with the strong relationship that already exists between TAWFA and the African Women Fish Traders and Processors Network [AWFISHNET] in the United Republic of Tanzania), REFEPAS reported lacking strong regional representation to better federate their efforts, and to have only just established contact with AWFISHNET.

27. The slack between local/national and regional level SSF representation in Africa is only partially filled by the RAG-Africa, or the recently created Africa Union-Interafrican Bureau of Aquatic Resources (AU-IBAR) African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture (see section 2.4), with both still in the process of finding their feet. The challenges to bring all SSF organizations together through virtual platforms during the COVID-19 crisis was underlined by several respondents. It was also felt that the RAG-Africa was insufficiently equipped to act as an effective communication broker between national SSF organizations, governments and FAO, thus dampening momentum and trust across these different actors. A national project coordinator added in this regard that more information about the activities of the RAG would benefit project activities at national level, in particular regarding the involvement of national NSA organizations in the formulation of NPOA-SSF.

Friends of the SSF Guidelines

Finding 5. The Friends of the SSF Guidelines operate discreetly and independently from the other entities of the SSF-GSF.

28. According to FAO (2021b), “Friends of the SSF Guidelines are COFI Members participating on a voluntary basis, i.e. governments. The Friends of the SSF Guidelines shall provide programmatic advice and guidance, including on future priorities, of the SSF Guidelines implementation to FAO and other interested actors. One Member shall be identified by the Members to represent the Friends of the SSF Guidelines and maintain relations with the AGs and the KSP of the GSF-SSF, including reporting to each session of COFI, directly or through the FAO secretariat”. Five countries were initially invited to act as Friends (Indonesia, Norway, Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania). Canada requested to become a Friend in 2021. As an informal entity, the Friends are “a fluid group able to support non-governmental advocacy and inclusion of the SSF Guidelines implementation in all relevant debates” (FAO, 2018b).
29. The influence of the Friends playing a part in science-policy dialogues was illustrated by the United Republic of Tanzania who was invited to share its experience and discuss lessons learned in the formulation of its NPOA-SSF at a meeting of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and to speak at an event organised for International Women’s Day (2022). However, due to infrequent meetings, the friendship group is not particularly conducive to strengthening relations between its members, except when circumstances bring them together towards a particular purpose or task, as has been the case with the preparation for potentially catalytic events such as COFI (side-event on SSF Guidelines) or the organization of a joint webinar with the AG in early 2021 (but not repeated since). There is also little evidence of bridges or communications with the other entities of the SSF-GSF (e.g. AG/RAG members) which indicates that the Friends of the SSF Guidelines as one such entity is operating in isolation from the rest of the SSF-GSF.

Knowledge Sharing Platform

Finding 6. The KSP is currently not operational. It is at present not clear who should drive the KSP, who should constitute it and what its modalities of functioning should be.

30. The nature and role of the KSP has been in constant evolution since its inception as part of the SSF-GSF, as documented in 2018 meeting reports of the SSF-GSF and AG. “The KSP is a body part of the Global Strategic Framework, meant to convene the other actors who are engaged in SSF Guidelines implementation and that work actively with small-scale fisheries issues, in particular with regard to the generation of knowledge and capacity development (e.g. academia, research institutes, regional organization, and NGOs). KSP members have the mission to support the AG and the Friends with research, communication, capacity development, resource mobilization and other activities.” (FAO, 2018c). It was recommended that it integrates indigenous knowledge and Indigenous Peoples, and used an easily accessible language (including multiple languages). It was also “widely recognised its fundamental role in the Education, the Information and the Communication”. However, the participation of national human rights commissions, journalists and the private sector, initially seen to fit in the platform, and its resource mobilisation role, were not retained for reasons unknown to the evaluator. At present the TORs of the KSP are in draft form (initially drafted in 2019 at, or prior to, the Penang meeting, and more recently picked up).
31. The creation of the KSP has been fraught with difficulties, due in part to lengthy discussions between FAO, SSF organizations (including AG/RAGs, through the IPC Working Group on Fisheries), the Environmental Defence Fund (EDF) and WorldFish on how and who should drive the agenda and functioning of the KSP, as well as its changing terms of reference. In parallel to this process, and independently from the project, EDF spearheaded establishment of the Small-Scale Fisheries Resource and Collaboration Hub (“SSF Hub”)⁵, inviting FAO, and the IPC Working Group on Fisheries to jointly explore if and how it could contribute to or become part of the KSP. Although there was (and still is) no intention for the SSF Hub to act as the KSP, the SSF Hub is currently filling a gap in providing open access to SSF resources and engagement with SSF matters (EDF, 2021), and constitutes a positive example of partners aiming to support the SSF Guidelines and the SSF-GSF. However, at present, neither the future direction of the KSP, nor its relation or complementarity with the SSF Hub are clear. The evolution of mindsets since the 2019 Penang meeting, as well as a renewed willingness to engage by all parties may open a space for a new conversation on the KSP and its place within the SSF-GSF. This conversation should include members of all the SSF-GSF structures so that the creation of bridges and an improved modus operandi be simultaneously explored.

In conclusion

32. The above analysis of the functioning of the entities of the SSF-GSF raises questions on the extent to which the SSF-GSF is currently fulfilling its role as “a partnership mechanism giving small-scale fishery actors, government representatives and other stakeholders a space to collaborate at a global level” and progressing towards its objective “to give small-scale fishery actors an opportunity to advise others on how they would like to see the SSF Guidelines put into action” (FAO, 2020a). Although this is not necessarily negatively impacting stakeholder empowerment itself, which can be supported in other ways as outlined in earlier sections, the fact that the SSF-GSF as a whole is only partially fulfilling its

⁵ <https://ssfhub.org/>

“advisory and facilitative role” (FAO, 2020a) is somewhat undermining the mission of “stewardship” / guardianship of the SSF Guidelines and their ethos that the SSF-GSF was initially and intentionally set out for.

2.3 Social inclusion, equity, and gender

Evaluation Question 3: In what ways and to what extent are the project interventions contributing to gender equality, equity, social inclusion, and empowerment of the targeted government actors, SSF actors, and organizations, and reaching the intended users along the SSF value chain?

Finding 7. The project’s support to SSF non-state organizations and to the SSF-GSF is an optimal way to promote the inclusion of Indigenous People, gender equality and equity in SSF. However, representation of the interests of SSF social movements in some project activities was felt to be uneven.

1. Social inclusion, the defense of small-scale actors (fishers and fish workers), gender equality, representation are precisely at the heart of the mandates, values and missions of SSF NSA organizations (representative professional organizations and social movements). Justice is an additional underpinning of SSF social movements/civil society organizations. Supporting representative professional organizations of small-scale fishers, either at regional (e.g. CAOPA) or national levels, and SSF social movements/civil society organizations either through direct capacity building or through support to the structures of the SSF-GFS (AG and RAGs) means supporting this cause. A delegate of the RAG is member of the Indigenous Peoples constituency. In addition, the project supports collaboration with the FAO Indigenous Peoples team, including the organization of webinars and in person meetings.
2. Within the AG/RAG, civil society organization representatives are appointed following criteria of gender balance (FAO, 2020d; 2020e) and any decision made needs to be endorsed by all members. However, events organized by the AG/RAG or through the IPC WG on Fisheries were reported by key informants to often have the same participants. Lack of renewal within IPC WG on Fisheries / AG / RAG members can result in missed opportunities for individual capacity building and empowerment. Young leaders/members of SSF social movements/civil society organizations were reported to be under-represented in these events, along with some participants from other parts of the world – language, additional costs of translation and time differences (for virtual events) can be a barrier to attendance.

2.4 Partnerships

Evaluation Question 4: To what extent has the project engaged relevant, strategic, and capable partners (so-called catalytic) at global, regional, and national levels?

Finding 8. The establishment of the RAG-Africa and of the AU-IBAR Continental African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture appear as two parallel processes. The extent of the connections and possible synergies between the two is unclear at this stage.

33. The IPC WG on Fisheries participated in the 2019 meeting organized by WorldFish and FAO in collaboration with AU-IBAR and New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), and hosted by SADC, that set in motion the establishment of the AU-IBAR Continental African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture (FAO, 2020c, IPC

website news, 11/07/2019⁶). “The IPC working Group participated in the workshop with 5 delegates from each of the African sub-regions to start to coordinate the global process of the SSF-GSF with the African Union process and to have recognized Small Scale Fisheries organizations at the lead of the process of implementation of the SSF Guidelines beyond FAO in Rome.” (IPC website news, 11/07/2019). Earlier discussions between the RAG-Africa and the AU-NEPAD working on NSA platforms had allowed the RAG “to start positioning itself in one of the main political processes active in the region” (SwedBio, 2020). The Continental African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture was formally launched in November 2021 with a ten-member bureau inclusive of the coordinators of the five pre-existing sub-regional platforms⁷: WANSAFA, EARFISH, North Africa, SANSAFA, PRAPAC, AWFISHNET (see Appendix B of the main report for a map of stakeholders). Members of the AU-IBAR Continental African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture include NGOs and some professional SSF organizations such as CAOPA. The AU-IBAR Continental African Coordination Platform covers both capture fisheries and aquaculture in its mandate. Some members of the RAG overlap with the sub-regional platforms, but, as reported by a respondent, “with different hats”.

34. The creation of the AU-IBAR African Continental Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture is separate from the project itself (which only supported attendance of some participants to the meetings related to the establishment of the coordination platform), but is indirectly linked to its work on the strengthening SSF NSA organizations and both share the mission to increase advocacy for SSF. How the connection between the RAG-Africa and the Coordination Platform will materialise is however unclear given that their respective constituencies both overlap in personnel and differ in nature. Indeed, the precise nature of the relationship between the RAG-Africa and existing sub-regional African Non-State Actors platforms⁸, established within the AU, is in a state of flux. To the exception of AWFISHNET, little secondary information could be found on how these sub-regional platforms will coherently and effectively support SSF advocacy. Views were expressed that a sub-committee under the African Coordination Platform could be established to ensure representation of the RAG-Africa in the Coordination Platform. Whilst taken together these developments are an encouraging sign of the attempts made at organising SSF stakeholders across Africa, and of the buoyancy of the SSF environment on the continent, there were concerns among some key informants that the risks of duplication or parallel processes could also complicate the landscape of SSF organizations. The African Coordination Platform was reported to have been struggling to meet up to now (mostly owing to procedural constraints), and to have led to few concrete results so far. The extent to which the work of the RAG-Africa, of the African Continental Coordination Platform and of the sub-regional African NSA platforms will be synergetic and strengthen representation and recognition of small-scale fishers and fishworkers in regional policy discussions, remains to be seen. Much scepticism emerged from the interviews in this regard.

⁶ <https://www.foodsovereignty.org/pan-african-workshop-on-strengthening-non-state-actors-nsa-platforms/>.

⁷ <https://www.au-ibar.org/au-ibar-news/african-continental-non-state-actors-coordination-platform-fisheries-and-aquaculture>

⁸ WANSAFA (West Africa, established in 2018), EARFISH (East Africa, established in 2017), AWFISHNET (women processors, established in 2017), SANSAFA (Southern Africa, established in 2018), PRAPAC (Central Africa, established in 2018), Maghreb Platform (established in 2013). (AU-IBAR, 2021).

Finding 9. Possibilities of partnerships and influence beyond SSF are emerging, notably through IPC-led communication initiatives to which the project is contributing.

35. Cross-overs between SSF and biodiversity conservation have been identified, notably through the co-management of SSF, and the Convention on Biodiversity Conservation (CBD) was targeted in this process. This has been facilitated by the fact that the IPC has a WG on Biodiversity and, with this connection, is well placed to understand the connection between biodiversity and the SSF Guidelines (the IPC WG on Biodiversity also includes someone from SSF). Towards the reinforcement of this cross-over, and with the aim of informing the biodiversity community of SSF, the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) and the AG/RAG decided to develop a "communication kit (handbook, video and posters) to ease the involvement of small-scale fisheries representatives in the CBD, with the aim of including the implementation of the SSF Guidelines in that process." (SwedBio, 2020). "This kit allow, on one side, to further enhance the inclusion of the SSF Guidelines into the CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and, on the other, to start developing an educational tool to be used by the members and the networks of the RAGs to increase awareness around specific biodiversity issues relevant to SSF communities (i.e. marine and coastal protected areas, marine and coastal area management, marine debris, marine spatial planning, etc.)" (IPC WG on Fisheries, 2022). Although the evaluation was not able to gather evidence of the current use of this communication kit or of its planned promotion, it is a demonstration of the AG/RAG's willingness and strategy to engage in wider UN-processes and issues.
36. Mirroring this development, a communication guide encapsulating SSF messages at the attention of non-SSF people in large conservation-oriented NGOs was elaborated by WorldFish in consultation with the IPC WG on Fisheries (with additional financial support from the Oak Foundation). The project complemented these various communication and outreach initiatives, for example through translation.

2.5 Potential sustainability and impact

Evaluation Question 5: What are the sustainability prospects of the project's advances, and what is their potential to contribute to long-term impact?

Finding 10. The sustainability of the facilitation work done by the IPC WG on Fisheries in support of the AG/RAG SSF-GSF, and engagement of SSF NSA organizations in regional and global processes initiated under the project, are dependent on future funds. Potential challenges presented to SSF by the development of ocean-related economies constitute another *raison d'être* for the SSF-GSF, although its capacity to autonomously steer the future direction of SSF is at present unclear.

37. The sustainability of the work achieved so far by the project through the involvement of IPC WG on Fisheries, and through direct support to SSF NSA organizations, is in balance and conditional to extended financial support beyond the life of the project. Crocevia, on behalf of the IPC WG on Fisheries, is already exploring funding possibilities outside of FAO's to continue covering incompressible operating costs such as meeting attendance and logistics for dialogue, and continue its support to the AG/RAGs. However, the need for extra resources to maintain the momentum reached by SSF organizations under the project was underlined by several respondents.

38. The project recently supported the design of a programme of work to advance the AG's efforts to support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines (summarized in Box 4), and which firms up the overall direction of the AG/RAG and facilitating role of the IPC WG on Fisheries. It was also felt that incorporating collected monitoring data on the implementation of the SSF Guidelines would improve planning and programming – the AG/RAG have already designed an approach to do so (related but different from the monitoring, evaluation and learning approach [MEL], elaborated through the project). The year and half left until project completion (December 2023), will be a key for the AG/RAG to assess the global SSF agenda and sharpen their position within it, but also to find the necessary funds to pursue the work initiated.

Box 3. The regional processes are focusing on the following workstreams:

- i. structuring the regional platforms and their logistical capacities to ensure a solid basis for coordinating the work of the members and ensure a continuous dialogue with the AG SSF-GSF and the IPC WG on Fisheries;
- ii. supporting and consolidating communication within social movements; and
- iii. strengthening the civil society organizations engagement, assessing the SSF Guidelines implementation and connecting them to the most relevant regional processes.

Source: IPC WG on Fisheries. 2022. Draft 0 of the report on Advancing the Advisory Group (AG SSF-GSF) efforts to support the SSF Guidelines implementation process.

39. Although the global community is increasingly sensitive to SSF (the place given to SSF stakeholders and discussions during the United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon in June 2022 is a good example of this), the development of "Blue" or ocean-based economies and their dilution of "blue justice" considerations are threatening smallholders (Bennett et al., 2019, Farmery et al., 2021). While this may not have had implications during the project implementation itself, it could present some risk for the sustainability of advances (see section 3.5 of the main report), and in particular for the future of small-scale fishers and fishworkers who can be easily excluded from planning decisions for ocean-based developments. SSF NSA organizations, and in particular social movements/civil society organizations, have a particular role in preserving the voices and defending the interests of small-scale fishers and fishworkers amidst these challenges. The unified voice for SSF that the organs of the SSF-GSF can together amplify in the face of these (and future) threats constitute another *raison d'être* for the SSF-GSF. However, the capacity of the SSF-GSF to steer the recognition of SSF further, and at multiple levels of governance, is not clear because it is not yet functioning as one: its structures are partially functional and disconnected from one another (see section 2.2).
40. This therefore suggests that it will be important to monitor the evolution of the SSF-GSF as a whole, while considering exploring other ways than the SSF-GSF to strengthen the voice of small-scale fishers and fishworkers, to further awareness about the sector and its constructive engagement in these processes.

2.6 Project management and FAO's role

Evaluation Question 6: To what extent are the management and implementation arrangements appropriate?

Finding 11. From the perspective of SSF NSA organizations, the overall administration of the project was smooth and satisfactory. However, the shift from support to meetings (i.e. process) to the preparation of products (i.e. outputs), imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, was felt to have diverted energy away from the consolidation and relationships across SSF social movements/civil

society organization.

41. All key informants appreciated the supportive nature of their work relationship with FAO's SSF Core Team, such as regular meetings and smooth administrative processes, e.g. LOAs, were dealt with effectively. While recognizing that processes cannot be entirely an end in themselves, it was noted by some key informants that the change in the nature of the work – from supporting people to attend meetings (process), to the preparation of outputs and reports (products), imposed by the impossibility to travel during the COVID-19 pandemic and encapsulated in an LOA, had somewhat hampered the full and meaningful engagement with the members of the AG/RAG.
42. While recognising that other project components also support SSF actors in many other ways, and that there are numerous linkages across all project components (see section 3.1.1 of the main report), the analysis of the level of project spending across the different outcomes (presented in Figure 5 in the main report) highlights that spending on outcomes 3 and 4 was low compared to other outcomes, as money earmarked to support the travel of non-state actors to meetings under these outcomes could not be spent.

Finding 12. FAO navigates to its best in the sensitive landscape of SSF NSA organizations but it is felt that it needs to improve its understanding of how social movements work. Expectations of the role of FAO in the SSF-GSF varied.

43. FAO was felt to be fully sympathetic and supportive to the involvement of SSF civil society organizations/social movements (and NSA organizations more generally) but, owing to its status, its way to support social movements was deemed to be not fully aligned with the expectations of the members of the AG/RAGs. The landscape of SSF civil society organizations/social movements is also politically-charged, and their revendications possibly pushing the agenda in a direction not fully supported by the governments of FAO member countries. This could potentially place FAO in a diplomatically-sensitive position. The political declaration adopted at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) 2022 has been highly criticized by SSF social movements for side-lining SSF concerns to the profit of "innovation" and the commodification of the ocean⁹. A number of respondents agreed that FAO needed to show a greater understanding of how SSF social movements work, influence and advocate for SSF concerns in regional and global forums, and notably of the time they need to position themselves on issues and democratically decide on ways forward – although it may not always be possible to move at the pace of the slowest. While being mindful of this, FAO and other partners (e.g. WorldFish, EDF) are keeping to a (project-related) dynamic to move the SSF agenda forward which is faster-paced and results-based. Similarly, and echoing the tensions between the different types of SSF organizations, it was also felt that NGOs should rethink the way they work and interact with SSF professional organizations. The evaluator's discussions with both FAO and members of SSF social movements, organizations and other stakeholders were indicative of this rift.
44. Interviews revealed various expectations of the role of FAO within the SSF-GSF. Given its constituencies, it was often suggested that it could be a bridge between the members of the Friends of the SSF Guidelines (governments – as duty-bearers) and the members of the AG/RAG (as rights-holders).

⁹ https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/inline-images/BeatriceGorez_Coordinator_Coalition_for_Fair_Fisheries_Arrangements.pdf

3. Pointers for consideration and lessons learned

45. The pointers for consideration that follow are food for thought and do not constitute recommendations for FAO, the IPC WG on Fisheries, members of the AG/RAG or SSF NSA organizations more generally. All parts of the analysis that preceded, at a minimum, will require further discussion and refinement jointly between the FAO, IPC WG on Fisheries, members of the AG/RAG or SSF NSA organizations.

On the recognition and empowerment of SSF NSA organizations, in particular social movements/civil society organizations and the AG/RAG

46. Efforts recognizing and emphasizing the capacity and role of SSF NSA organizations, through support to the AG/RAG need to continue in order to maintain and amplify the beginnings of momentum. Their place in driving the SSF agenda and implementation of the SSF Guidelines is essential. #nodecisionwithoutme, as highlighted by the representatives of SSF organizations during the UNOC 2022, should be the leitmotiv, but requires understanding and proactivity on behalf of all concerned parties.

On the functioning and scope of work of the AG/RAG

47. The overlap in membership of the IPC WG on Fisheries and the AG is leading somewhat to some ambiguities regarding the agenda and mandates of these two entities. Talking about the work of the AG (and RAGs) invariably implies talking about the work of IPC WG on Fisheries even if the latter is only meant to be facilitating the work of the former. Clarifying each entity's position may strengthen the advisory role of the AG/RAG, as well as their representative function and liaison with professional SSF organizations and with existing African NSA platforms.
48. Justice and advocacy beyond SSF are two areas that the RAG could consider getting more involved in through its support to members to intervene at national levels. For example, on the fronts of:
- i. justice / legal court cases. Following the successful interventions to block development contrary or damaging to SSF interests, the provision of advice and support to the national SSF NSA organizations and social movements representing small-scale fishers in court cases could be explored as an area of work by the RAG.
 - ii. Advocacy in Blue Economy spheres and developments, by campaigning for the equitable representation of SSF in discussions and planning of developments in coastal areas in countries where Blue Economy development planning is initiated.
49. Bringing young leaders in the AG/RAG, through a handover period overlapping with the rotation of representatives to the AG/RAG would contribute to sustainability and dynamism in the activities of the AG/RAG.
50. With the resuming of 'normal' work conditions, and the possibility to hold in-person meetings, a balance should be struck between supporting interactions (process) and producing outputs in contractual agreements between funders and the IPC WG on Fisheries or SSF organizations.
51. How to improve internal communications within the RAG, across members of the RAG and IPC WG on Fisheries, between the FAO, governments and SSF organizations at national

level (with the AG/RAG possibly at the center of this triangle) should be considered with attention as part of the continuous building of trust and transparency.

52. Overcoming trust issues will mean that all partners reflect on, and review, their work and priorities, and adopt different, more inclusive and tailored, work practices and timeframes within what is possible.
53. Vertical channels require further strengthening for bringing up and down the interests of local small-scale fishers, and on the other hand, that the place and role of the RAG-Africa in this process be thoroughly considered, especially as new regional structures, such as the African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture¹⁰ are emerging.

On the SSF-GSF and role and place of FAO in the complex and sensitive landscape of SSF stakeholders

54. Even though still only partially functional, the SSF-GSF is unique in recognising the diversity of SSF stakeholders (through its different structures) and in its attempts to bring together, for the first time, all the stakeholders who “care” about SSF, and small-scale fishers and fishworkers themselves around one common cause – the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. However, the SSF-GSF has also brought to light the fact that SSF stakeholders (state and non-state organizations)’s interests and ways to operate are multiple and not always aligned. This suggests that more time may be required for the structures of the SSF-GSF to find their feet and smooth out their communications and internal modus operandi, and that the evolution of the SSF-GSF will require attentive monitoring.
55. FAO needs to find its place in the landscape of its member countries (government stakeholders) and its partners (non-state actors stakeholders) whose views and interests may not always be fully aligned. While FAO should continue its efforts in applying its principles of engagement with civil society organizations, such as self-determination, and to advocate among its constituency that these are better recognized and accounted for in national discussions around SSF at policy level, it may be more difficult for the Organization to do so in regional or global spheres where FAO becomes (or is seen) as one of the stakeholders and where it is much perceived that SSF NSA organizations should drive the agenda.
56. It is possible that the development of the AG/RAG will follow its natural course outside FAO’s direct support because the structure for their support (through the IPC WG on Fisheries) is appropriate and creating a sense of belonging. FAO may be better placed to facilitate the coordination of national-level SSF organizations (professional and civil society organizations) while continuing supporting their capacity development to better engage with regional organizations and processes. For reasons given in the paragraph above, the responsibility to link national to regional, and regional to global levels and advocate for SSF may be better left in the hands of regional and global SSF social movements/ civil society organizations, through the AG/RAG (supported and facilitated by the IPC WG on Fisheries). How FAO monitors processes, at all levels, should be considered.

¹⁰ <https://www.au-ibar.org/au-ibar-news/african-continental-non-state-actors-coordination-platform-fisheries-and-aquaculture>

57. How the SSF agenda is mainstreamed and harmonized with FAO’s vision for transforming aquatic food systems¹¹ will also require consideration, given potential tensions that could arise between FAO’s support to SSF social movements highly critical of aquaculture development and its thrust for “sustainable aquaculture expansion and intensification aquaculture”, the first pillar¹² of its Blue Transformation agenda.

On the KSP

58. The role and function of the KSP need an open discussion between FAO and the AG/Rag (through facilitation of the IPC WG on Fisheries), while bearing in mind the existence of the SSF Hub. Functions of the KSP could be multiple and it is evident that a ‘born again’ KSP could play an important role in maintaining dialogue and trust across SSF partners. It could be the forum where the AG/RAG, Friends of the SSF Guidelines and other SSF stakeholders meet (as they did through the webinars), where non-fisheries stakeholders are invited for discussions and awareness raising. Reaching an agreement on who should curate the platform will be an essential step in this process.
59. This engagement should be conducted as part of the continuous reconciliation of diverging views and misunderstandings (eNGO vs fishers/SSF), and potentially envisaged through the KSP (under its current name or relabeled) – should its role to do so be endorsed by all members of the SSF-GSF structures. Capitalizing on IPC’s strategic positioning in facilitating this dialogue (for example through its WG on Biodiversity) should also be considered.

Lessons

60. With regard to processes and the participation of social movements and civil society organizations: Progress is being made but time is essential to create truly democratic decision-making - all partners, including FAO, need to understand this.
61. SSF stakeholder empowerment has been mostly confined to the work of the AG/RAG rather than the SSF-GSF as a whole.
62. SSF NSA are not a homogenous group of stakeholders. It is important to distinguish SSF social movements and civil society organizations, from NGOs, from SSF professional organizations.

¹¹ <https://www.fao.org/3/cc0461en/online/sofia/2022/transforming-aquatic-based-food.html>

¹² As an observation in passing: the place of aquaculture as the first pillar of FAO’s Blue Transformation strategy is a noteworthy development denoting a departure from the historical emphasis of the Organization on capture fisheries (‘aquaculture’ was included in the name of the department/unit only in the mid-2000s, and, to the evaluator’s knowledge, had not been presented ahead of capture fisheries).

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Appendix 1. People interviewed

No.	Name of respondent	Level or country	Affiliation	Role (in relation to project, as appropriate)	Interviewer	Date KII or meeting
1	Maria Edelmira Da Costa, Fatou Sock	Cabo Verde	FAO Country Office, CFI-WA Lead Technical Officer	Ex-National Project Coordinator	CB	02-Jun-22
2	Aboubakar Koné	Côte d'Ivoire	FAO Country Office	National Project Coordinator	CB	13-May-22
3	Amadou Touré	Senegal	FAO Country Office	National Project Coordinator	CB	11-May-22
4	M. Coumé	Senegal	Ministère des Pêches et de l'Économie Maritime, Gouvernement du Sénégal	National coordinator in the Ministry	CB	26-May-22
5	Madame Diop	Senegal	<i>Réseau des Femmes de la Pêche artisanale au Sénégal</i> (REFEPAS)	President	CB	03-Jun-22
6	Alushe Hitula	Namibia	FAO Country Office	National Project Coordinator	CB	24-May-22
7	Radonirina Ioniirilala	Madagascar	FAO Country Office	National Project Coordinator	CB, HA, RR	18-May-22
8	Oliva Mkumbo	United Republic of Tanzania	FAO Country Office	National Project Coordinator	CB	27-May-22, 13-Jun-22

No.	Name of respondent	Level or country	Affiliation	Role (in relation to project, as appropriate)	Interviewer	Date KII or meeting
9	Lilian Ibengwe	United Republic of Tanzania	Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Government of the United Republic of Tanzania	Representative of the Friends of the SSF Guidelines / national focal point in Ministry	CB	17-Jun-22
10	Hadija Malibiche	United Republic of Tanzania	Tanzanian Women Fishworkers Association (TAWFA)	Secretary	CB	20-Jun-22
11	Gilles van de Walle, Steven Ciocca, Hashim Muumin, Andrea Zamparelli, Amy Gaye	Africa-wide	FAO (United Republic of Tanzania, offices)	FISH4ACP Chief Technical Adviser and project team in Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania	CB	09-Jun-22
12	Jessica Landman, Alexis Rife, Pamela Ruiter	Global	Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)	SSF Team	CB	14-Jun-22
13	Velia Lucidi	Global	Crocevia / IPC Working Group on Fisheries	Secretary of IPC Working Group on Fisheries	CB	25-May-22
14	Gaoussou Gueye	Africa-wide	<i>Confédération Africaine des Organisations de Pêche Artisanale</i> (CAOPA), AU-IBAR African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture, WANSFAFA	Secretary, President, Representative (respectively)	CB	13-Jun-22

Appendix 1. People interviewed

No.	Name of respondent	Level or country	Affiliation	Role (in relation to project, as appropriate)	Interviewer	Date KII or meeting
15	Vincent Bihimvyumuderi	Burundi	WFF Burundi	Member of the Regional Advisory Group for Africa	CB	25-Jun-22
16	Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk	Thailand	WFP Thailand	Member of the Regional Advisory Group for Asia	CB	15-Jun-22, 27-Jun-22
17	Hanna Wetterstrand, Ana Carolina Marciano	Sweden	SwedBio	Co-funders of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries	CB	09-Jun-22
18	Anna Patel	Global	WorldFish Centre	Joint facilitator of SSF Webinars, Knowledge Sharing Platform	CB	06-Jun-22
19	Nicole Franz, Lena Westlund	Global	FAO HQ	SSF Core Team	CB, RR	02-Jul-22

Appendix 2. Members of the Regional Advisory Groups

In Africa, the RAG appointed Masifundise as the organization to host the Secretariat. As of July 2022, the global and regional networks represented in the African RAG are:

- i. African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFishNET)
- ii. Indigenous Peoples of Africa Co-ordinating Committee (IPACC)
- iii. La Via Campesina (LVC)
- iv. Plateforme Régionales des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale (PROPAC)
- v. Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (ROPPA)
- vi. World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers (WFF)
- vii. World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)

In Asia and Pacific, the RAG appointed NAFSO as the organization hosting the Secretariat. As of July 2022, the global networks represented in the Asia and Pacific RAG are:

- i. La Via Campesina (LVC):
- ii. Serikat Petani Indonesia (SPI), Indonesia
- iii. Serikat Nelayan Indonesia (SNI), Indonesia
- iv. International Indian treaty Council (IITC)
- v. World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers (WFF)
- vi. East Coast Fisher Association, India/Bangladesh
- vii. World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)
- viii. National Fisheries Solidarity (NAFSO), Sri Lanka
- ix. Southern Thailand Fisher Forum (STFF), Thailand
- x. Pakistan Fisher Forum (PFF), Pakistan
- xi. Pamalakaya, Philippines
- xii. Pakisma, Philippines
- xiii. Kesatuan Nelayan Tradisional Indonesia (KNTI)

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the regional AG is selecting a person/organization to host the Secretariat, which will be appointed by the beginning of May 2022. As of July 2022, the global networks represented in the Latin America and Caribbean RAG are:

- i. La Via Campesina (LVC)
- ii. International Indian Treaty Council (IITC)
- iii. Kuna Indigenous Nation
- iv. Yaqui Indigenous Nation
- v. World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers (WFF)
- vi. UNION ARGENTINA DE PESCADORES ARTESANALES (UAPA)
- vii. CONFEDERACION NACIONAL DE PESCADORES ARTESANALES DE CHILE (CONAPACH)
- viii. FEDERACION DE INTEGRACION Y UNIFICACION DE LOS PESCADORES ARTESANALES DEL PERU (FIUPAP)
- ix. World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)
- xi. Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO)
- xii. COORDINADORA NACIONAL PARA LA DEFENSA DEL ECOSISTEMA MANGLAR (CCONDEM)
- xiii. Movimento dos Pescadores e Pescadoras (MPP)

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Rome, Italy



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