



Warning: Illegal string offset 'perms' in /home/newag/public_html/focus/focusItem.php on line 21

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New Agriculturist



Fishing for private expertise

Aquaculture currently produces more than 50 per cent of all fish and seafood products that are consumed worldwide, and 80 per cent of global aquaculture production is located in Asia. With ongoing intensification and global networking, aquaculture is creating an increasing demand for infrastructure and supporting public services, resulting in a diversity of public-private partnerships (PPPs).

Aceh is a good example. In this Indonesian Province, low quality seed material, diseases, financial problems and a lack of expertise are endangering the livelihoods of more than 20,000 smallscale milkfish and shrimp farmers. As a result, pond productivity has been very low, often less than 100kg per hectare, where 300 to 500kg per hectare is possible. To help farmers increase the productivity of their aquaculture ponds, Aquaculture Livelihood Service Centres (ALSC) have been established in collaboration between private farmers with development agencies, banks and NGOs, including the Japanese OISCA, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the WorldFish Center.

During this PPP project, groups of farmers formally established ALSC's as private cooperatives, each led by a *Pertuah Neuhun* (traditional community leader with responsibility for aquaculture livelihoods). Each centre is therefore a community-run business which is designed to increase local farmer networking for the advantage of the communities.

ALSCs provide the farmers with technological and market information, technical assistance and microfinance support through an innovative system of community information services that include interactive learning DVDs, SMS services, training events and member networking through a modern GPS database. The centres also supply feed, fertiliser and high quality seed material for shrimp, milkfish and tilapia to the farmer members. By the end of March 2010, four ALSCs were assisting 2,656 smallscale farmers with ponds of 0.5-2 hectares. More centres are planned to support up to 10,000 farmers in the region by 2011.

The centres are supported by a team of 22 extension workers, who assist farmers in decision making with regards to crop planning, harmonised stocking, disease control and harvesting. "By harmonizing the production cycles and supply of high quality seed, production consistently increased," says Bangarusamy Ravikumar, the leader of the extension project. "The next stage is to develop the ALSC towards an umbrella organisation to become a self-sustaining profitable business, which meets market demands by delivering input services, micro-finance support, management advice and marketing."

The case of Cameroon

In Cameroon, the 'Sustainable Use of African Rainforest Rivers' project, involving the WorldFish Center, the World Bank's Development Marketplace and the National Geographic Society, built partnerships between fishers and Gulf Aquatics, a private aquarium fish exporter. Together they have developed new technologies to capture, hold, transport, and reduce mortality rates of fish, thus raising incomes for both fishers and the exporter. "Some eight million inhabitants of the Lower Guinean rainforest depend upon river ecosystems for their livelihoods," explains



More than 20,000 smallscale farmers are involved in milkfish and shrimp aquaculture in Aceh
Jamie Oliver



Sustainable approaches for farming ornamental fish have been developed to improve livelihoods of poor communities
Randall Brummett

Randall Brummett, WorldFish project leader. "Increasing population, poverty and governance arrangements that undervalue biodiversity and disenfranchise local people have led to habitat destruction and over-exploitation, threatening both livelihoods and biodiversity."

Using the 'Farmer-Scientist Research Partnership' model, the project is establishing community-based producer networks to raise and sell ornamental fish. Some 20 fishing villages now sell ornamental fish to a new trade company through a supervised process to ensure transparency. In addition to the construction of fish spawning and holding ponds at four sites, the partnership has led to the sustainable use of natural resources, increasing awareness about the use of pesticides, higher incomes for fishermen and quality of fish supplied, and building trust within the Cameroonian ornamental fish market.

PPPs in aquaculture and fisheries

It has often been argued that PPPs mobilise additional financial resources, capacities and expertise, and increase the effectiveness and sustainability of development cooperation. To determine whether this has applied in the aquaculture and fisheries sector, WorldFish, and the Humboldt University, on behalf of GTZ Germany, reviewed 53 PPPs across Africa, Asia and South America.

According to the review, PPPs generally evolve where there are clear incentives for strong private actors from developed countries, such as access to global markets and food safety. Over the last ten years, most development oriented PPPs in aquaculture and fisheries have been driven by the private sector and aimed to develop supply chains and markets (30 per cent). Public and civil institutions and development organisations use PPPs to accommodate the demand for public service needs e.g. to improve production infrastructures and technologies (25 per cent) or to implement development oriented research activities (14 per cent). Other objectives of PPPs included environmental management and conservation, pro-poor business development, certification and standardisation, capacity building and different corporate social responsibility activities.



More than 200 species of valuable ornamental fish live in the rivers of the Lower Guinean rainforest
Randall Brummett

Whereas many PPPs depended on the financial input of private partners, the contribution of smallscale private farmers with local expertise and in-kind contributions was often undervalued. But the review found that some of the PPPs had improved the effectiveness of public infrastructure services and service delivery to smallscale farmers, and that such partnerships can be beneficial for fishermen and the environment alike.

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