

INNOVATIONS IN FISHERIES CO-MANAGEMENT, AND THE CHALLENGE OF MOBILITY

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Abstract

The Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Programme (SFLP) of the FAO, with financing from the UK, carried out two sub-regional pilot projects on fisheries co-management, one in inland waters (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Ghana) from 2003 to 2006 and one in the marine coastal area (Congo, Gabon, Guinea and Mauritania) from 2004 to 2006.

Co-management attempts mostly focus on improving fish-stock management, requiring people to reduce fishing activities, without offering any interim benefits. Thus incentives are not taken into account. The SFLP approach to co-management was instead based on embedding fisheries management in a development context, recognising that local institutions for resource management could also be used to mobilise finance and services in support of fishing communities. It gives priority to an enabling legal framework and appropriate institutions.

Using the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) in resource governance, SFLP has demonstrated that the transaction costs of a shift to

co-management can be offset by parallel investments in poverty reduction. The linkage between co-management and local development allowed community-based fishery organisations and fishery departments to integrate resource management requirements with local development processes.

Co-management requires a supportive political and legal environment. Appropriate systems for communication between stakeholders must be built to encourage community participation. All components of the rural communities must have equitable representation in co-management institutions, to take all interests into consideration.

Capacity building (adult literacy, micro-finance, alternative income) help detach fishing communities from the resource to some extent, and lays the foundation for poverty and vulnerability reduction in fishing communities. The capacities of government officers and local community groups should also be strengthened. Functional and effective co-management institutions give the framework and the tools for dialogue with authorities and organisations. At the end of the

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project the fisheries sector was integrated in poverty reduction strategies in most of the SFLP's countries.

Fishing communities are complex with regard to living conditions, composition, social organisation and their strategies to ensure livelihoods. One of these strategies is migration, a phenomenon as complex as the communities themselves. SFLP has reached a better understanding of the reasons behind fisheries migratory movements along the coast of West Africa. The improved knowledge is needed to inform fisheries management policies and poverty reduction strategies in fishing communities. Among the many reasons that make fishing people migrate, economic factors (search for markets, opportunities to save for future investments, security lines, etc.) are without doubt the most important ones.

Introduction

Co-management arrangements are a way for fisheries departments to improve efficiency and reduce costs, or a response to reduced resources due to poor property rights, and the perception that this is a main cause of poverty (Pomeroy 1997, Lowry 1999). Experience from around the world shows that the following conditions are important to successful fisheries co-management (adapted from APFIC/FAO 2005):

1. An enabling policy and legal framework, and continued government support;
2. Effective institutions and linkages;
3. Real participation by resource users and other stakeholders, avoiding elite capture and ex-

clusion of minority groups;

4. Incentives for individuals to participate.

In the Central Africa region, co-management arrangements have been successfully used in forestry (Nguinguiri 2004) but there are no well-documented fishery examples. In West Africa, on the other hand, there are several examples including some of the earliest fisheries co-management arrangements in the world (Sverdrup 1998). In most of these cases, co-management was government-based, and user groups were not given the necessary authority through enabling legislation. Hence the co-management was not institutionalised.

Earlier co-management attempts in the region – and indeed most co-management programmes worldwide – were focused on improving fish-stock management, with the assumption that poverty could be reduced solely or primarily by improving the state of fish resources. This inevitably required people to reduce their own fishing activities, without any form of interim or collateral benefits. Thus incentives were not taken into account, except in the form presumed future benefits from higher fish catches and more secure community-based aquatic property rights. In the context of poverty and high levels of vulnerability, this has often proven insufficient incentive to gain the cooperation of communities.

The FAO/SFLP approach to co-management was instead based on embedding the need for fisheries management in a wider development context, recognising that collective-action institutions for resource management could also be used to mobilise finance and services in support

of other aspects of peoples' lives besides resource management. The SFLP approach incorporates broader development functions and gives priority to an enabling legal framework and appropriate institutions. Experiences show that co-management can be effective and sustainable in the context of poverty.

The overall strategy was to promote improved resource management in conjunction with a development support process. As well as ensuring the sustainability of fishery resources in the lakes and coastal zones, a key objective of the two pilot projects was to contribute to poverty reduction in fishing communities. A co-management based approach was developed on the basis of the SLA (Sustainable Livelihoods Approach) analytical framework to assess and address the multiple dimensions of poverty in fishing communities and the principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to ensure management actions were compatible with responsible fisheries principles.

Building an enabling policy and legal framework

For the ongoing decentralisation to be achieved, governments have to put in place appropriate capacity and systems for implementation, including the institutional and legal framework and supportive regulations and guidelines to facilitate the process at the central, intermediary and local levels. All these initiatives relate to how to approach and handle poverty reduction and service provision to fishing communities in

a development context. In addressing these issues the SFLP also incorporated consideration of environmental entitlements (including rights to land and water), equity concerns (including gender equity) and the mechanisms generating social exclusion (including conflict between migrants and residents). This was conducted together with the poverty alleviation policies with the support of many partners, through Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

However, despite the general decentralisation movement, real decision-making power and resources have not always been reallocated to local communities. New instruments for local management institutions that could cooperate with local authorities were needed. The pilot projects contributed to creating a legal environment that was conducive to co-management, and to the participation of fishing communities in decision-making in local development. When needed new legal, administrative and institutional arrangements were developed, but in most SFLP countries it was a matter of using and interpreting – as well as updating when required – existing laws and procedures.

The pilot projects supported the emergence of recognised local fisheries organisations that addressed both resource management and poverty reduction. By highlighting the synergies, SFLP contributed to the mainstreaming of small-scale fisheries in local and national development policies. Hence, the fishery communities became more audible, and their concerns more visible, better understood and better considered by policy makers and development partners.

The new institutions address the three dimensions of poverty – vulnerability, marginalisation and social exclusion – within fishing communities.

1. *Vulnerability* – Access to health services and secure fundamental rights was improved. Fishing communities were integrated in HIV/AIDS and other endemic diseases initiatives; and co-management institutions took the lead to sensitise and involve fisheries community members and other stakeholders in the process (e.g. Congo, Gabon and Mauritania).

2. *Marginalisation* – Institutions were developed considering rights to work, rights of migrants and gender equity. Migrants and women are members of socio-professional and co-management organisations and participate in decision making process.

3. *Poverty* – The strategy was diversification, education, micro-finance and partnership development. Fishing management committees organised development initiatives forums to attract funding by NGOs (Burkina Faso and the Gambia). The fisheries sector was integrated in PRSPs in most of the SFLP countries. Fisherfolk organisations established partnerships with micro-finance institutions and diversified their livelihoods in various non-fishing activities including agriculture, livestock, petty commerce and handicraft. Trainings in literacy, basic accounting and organisational development played a facilitating role.

A major limitation of the work, however, was a lack of time and resources to build on these incipient achievements and to ensure that improved

linkages with development processes at meso and macro level translated into measurable gains. In some cases, the required policy and legal reforms were not completed due to lack of time. Further support to these innovative and important initiatives is required.

Building effective institutions and linkages

The most common form of co-management builds on grass root structures including socio-professional organisations at the micro level, made up mainly of the different components of the community (fishermen, women fish processors, village heads, fish traders, etc.) and multi-sector organisations at the meso level (local government, district, division) which include representatives from fishing communities, local administration, NGOs and socio-economic institutions (micro-finance and others). Advisory services may also be provided by central government institutions, or even by international organisations – e.g. inputs into research. The inclusion of the poor and other marginalised groups (women, migrants) into the co-management institutions is a key issue for poverty reduction.

Two examples, one in Burkina Faso (inland) and one in Guinea (marine) illustrate the co-management institutions created and their linkages with wider development activities. The local fisheries institutions built up at the local level in the two countries represent the majority of resource users in their communities, have legal status and through their collaboration with NGOs, micro-

finance institutions (MFIs) and institutions in charge of local development are establishing links between co-management and the development process. They are a vital channel for representing their members, and have the opportunity of influencing policies and decision-making.

In Burkina Faso, two management committees were set up, one on Lake Bagré, and the other on Lake Komoé, comprising the territorial administration, the decentralised technical administrations, consular chambers, NGOs, MFIs, representatives of traditional rulers, and representatives of socio-professional associations. The committee has a legal and legitimate status. It has helped increase awareness among national authorities of the interests of fishing communities. The committee approves the co-management plans, and creates specialised commissions to address specific management issues such as surveillance, local fisheries management fund, training, protection of fish habitats and of the water banks. The fact that all co-management structures have legal status and legitimacy helped to restore confidence between the administration and the fishing communities, and to ensure the effective participation in the co-management process.

In Guinea, the formalisation of the fishing communities' participation in fishery resource management led to the establishment of legally-recognised community based institutions. These bodies carry out duties such as participatory surveillance, monitoring and evaluation through ad hoc bodies recognised by the Guinean authorities. These small-scale fisheries consultative

councils give advice on matters related to fishery resource management and local development activities. The fishers are now no longer passive onlookers, but players in a participatory process: Their representative bodies participate with regional and national bodies in formulating fishery management measures for coastal areas, as well as in monitoring the implementation and in participatory surveillance. The communities are now fully involved in decision-making in fishery management and other matters of interest to them. The legal recognition of fishers' right irrespective of nationality has resulted in migrant fishers becoming involved in fisheries management.

Enabling effective and equitable participation

Since the co-management experience is still in its early stage in most of West and Central Africa countries, it became necessary for the SFLP to initiate an institutional capacity building strategy, so that the different partners involved – fishing communities in particular – can participate effectively in decision-making and protect their interests. Participatory appraisals gave a better understanding of the causes of poverty in fishing communities (poverty profile) and helped ensure that marginalised groups (women, migrants) are included in the institutional process, and have equity in their access to the resources and profit sharing. Three factors – illiteracy, difficult access to credit and weak organisational capacities of fishing communities – were found as the major reasons behind the low participation level of rural

communities in decision-making, and especially in fisheries resource management.

Therefore, SFLP addressed community development issues, concerning human capacity development, such as numeracy and literacy training (especially but not only of women), improving access to health information and services, and the development of technical skills (such as improvement in fish processing techniques, particularly fish smoking as a means of reducing post-harvest losses, and of support for alternative income generating activities). They also emphasised building social capital, for example through development of professional organisations, and modest investment in physical capital, such as development of community infrastructure. For coastal fisheries, migration of fisheries communities makes building capacity initiatives more complex. In the countries involved, the majority of fishers are migrants.

The improvement of the educational level and organisational skills of the beneficiaries had a positive impact on various aspects of their livelihood assets:

- **Improvement of the organisational capacities of fishing communities** – Adult literacy programs helped to create new socio-professional organisations and improve the capacities of existing ones. Today, more than half of the managers of fishermen’s and women fish processors’ groups and associations in the pilot project sites are educated. An understanding that the informal nature of the associations is a handicap has led to their being legalised. With official status, the associations were able to apply for microfinance, which

enabled training and loans. Moreover, capacity-building helped the stakeholders share the same vision of co-management and understand the link with decentralisation and local development policies.

- **Improved information flow** – Capacity-building has given more reliable reports from meetings with delegates of fishing and other stakeholders (projects, administrations, etc.). Information sharing has improved, as have the discussions ensuing from them. All these promote a better understanding of the issues at stake, as well as the involvement of one and all.

- **Emergence of a democratic spirit** – Community-based organisations are beginning to assign representatives of the fishing communities on the basis of their skills and ability to defend their interests. Birthright (traditional rights to deference/reference) is gradually being replaced by the promotion of competence and efficiency.

Incentives to participate in co-management, in the context of poverty

There is a need to ensure that users groups will continue to collaborate and contribute their time and effort to the co-management process. These efforts depend not only on government support, but also on the incentives that cooperation and participation offer. Returns to co-management may not appear in the short term. The costs may be the only visible outcome, such as reduced access to resources, more rules regulating access, the need to invest in monitoring and enforcement,

and for time in decision-making and consensus-building. To overcome these, and sustain people's participation, either expected future benefits must be very great, or some short-term incentives – positive changes that are associated with a transition to co-management – must be visible too. This requires careful attention to how collective action can address some of the capability and assets deficits that people experience, at the same time as resource management institutions are developed. The kinds of activities that can be associated with a co-management programme include:

- **Enhancement of financial capital** – Access to microfinance institutions in the context of co-management is a good incentive. Fishing communities that have undergone the adult literacy programmes, and in particular the women, have had new livelihood opportunities available to them. Thanks to capacity building in the pilot project, they have become better organised and hence eligible to loan schemes offered by microfinance institutions. Also, negotiation skills gained from training activities made them able to convince their partners easier than before and to advocate their cases.

- **Alternative income generating activities** – Fishing communities, like all rural communities, tend to diversify their activities to deal with the risks of uncertain returns – if opportunities are economically viable and conditions enable access to them. The imperative to diversify is greatest when fisheries resources are overexploited and incomes from them decline, or become more variable. Enabling diversification can be seen as

a fisheries management measure, and a key part of any co-management process. Promoting new income generating activities helps to improve the overall income of households, but, in the context of fishery management, their most notable effect lies in the fact that they create alternatives to fishing, thereby raising the opportunity costs of entering the fishing and opportunity income of leaving it.

Income generating activities help to improve the productivity of women fish traders and women who process fish products for a living. They also help to reduce the exclusion of women in the production systems. Fishermen, on their part, acquire equipment, a fact that may lead one to think that fishing effort will increase as a result. However, what has often been observed is that the loans are actually used to purchase fishing materials that comply better with the regulations. In these cases, fishermen are investing in both their own livelihoods and in the responsible governance of the resources that sustain them. This is an indication that incentives for fisheries management can be fostered through the reduction of uncertainty and vulnerability.

- **Vulnerability reduction** – Vulnerable people with uncertain futures are likely to have less incentive to participate in fisheries co-management that requires short-term restraint for long term gain. This is particularly the case in communities experiencing high levels of morbidity and mortality as a result of accidents at sea, and AIDS-related illness. In such cases, raising the community's awareness of HIV/AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases, and addressing

safety at sea become a key part of an investment in co-management.

• **Incentives linked to policies** – Where the SFLP conducted co-management pilot projects, more attention was paid to fishing community concerns by policy makers, than elsewhere. Training in participatory approaches, such as the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA), were provided for civil society technical partners (NGOs) and the public sector officers. The development of multiform strategic partnerships has also resulted in the fishing communities' concerns being reflected in local development. Multifunctional institutions (IMF, health, decentralisation, food security, PRSP, education, etc.) addressed both poverty reduction and resource management, and joined their assets. The synergy boosted constitutes an incentive for policy makers to support co-management. Working with multifunctional institutions provides resource users with partners whose complementary actions can help to improve different dimensions of their livelihood.

The challenge of migration to devolved fisheries management

Acknowledging that migration is one of the strategies that fishing communities often use in order to secure their livelihoods, the SFLP pilot project carried out a migration evaluation study. It was based on case studies in the four participating countries (Congo, Gabon, Guinea and Mauritania) and in other countries in the sub-region, two considered to be countries of emi-

gration (Benin and Senegal) and one country of immigration (Cameroon).

Who migrates and why

In the West and Central Africa region, coastal countries allow entry to migrant fishing communities from neighbouring countries without any restrictions and it would appear that this relatively open access to resources favours increased migration for fishing. However, as it is generally recognised, migrant communities are not homogenous and also within a single community a variety of fishing migration patterns may be found.

Internal migration takes place between fishing settlements within the same country in order to follow fish stocks or to take advantage of certain facilities or fish prices for during particular periods of the year. It can be short-term, long-term or permanent; the duration varies according to country and the dynamic fluctuations characterising fisheries sector.

International migration is usually a long-term phenomenon. Fishers from Benin, Ghana and Nigeria moved to the countries in the south of Gulf of Guinea (Cameroon, Congo and Gabon) many years ago and some are there since several generations (Atti-Mama 2006). Migrating fishers with employment contracts do not necessarily always work for the same employer but can change fishing boat and type of fishing that they engage in from one season to another. In spite of long periods abroad, these migrants tend to keep in contact with their home countries by visiting

DEFINITIONS

Short-term migration: Lasts for at least a few weeks but less than a fishing season.

Seasonal migration: Fishing people, sometimes including family members, stay in foreign fishing settlements for one or two seasons and then return home for a certain amount of time.

Long-term migration: Fishing people settle abroad for several years (20–40 years or sometimes more), but eventually return to their home country.

Permanent migration: Second or third generation fishing people that end up being assimilated into the local population and in most cases also take the host country's nationality.

Contractual migration: Migration that is motivated by an employment contract that has been formally established in the country of origin. The duration of the contract may be for one or several years and the fisher makes visits to his home country during this period (circular migration).

from time to time, participating in religious or cultural ceremonies. Not all international migration is permanent or long-term, however. Once settled in their country of destination, migrants may combine several different migration strategies and make shorter or longer trips away from their home base.

Women have a special status in the migration process. During short-term migrations, wives do not usually go with their fishers husbands. For long-term migration, many women follow their husbands on their travels. In the country of destination, the majority of women works in fish processing and marketing and hence support their husbands' work. Women may also contribute to the financing of fishing activities by lending their savings to fishers. Some women become boat owners which facilitate their access to fish for processing and marketing. For those who do not migrate but stay in the home country, some of the money sent back by their husbands will

typically be invested in small businesses allowing them to gain a certain independence during the absence of their husbands.

Children also take part in migration and those who travel, both boys and girls, are of all ages and could be fishers or fish workers (processors, canoe builders), training to become fishers or fish workers, of school age or younger (Sall 2006). There tends to be a lack of appropriate schools and education facilities in the often remote areas where migrants settle (Ngo Likeng 2006, Sall 2006). Even in urban areas and when parents manage to enrol their children in public or private schools, there is often a lack of monitoring and support that makes successful education difficult. Frequent travelling, the inauspicious fisheries environment and requirements for extra labour or help disrupt children's schooling. Children who stay behind in their home countries tend to attend school but are deprived of the presence and support of their parents.

In spite of the importance of fisheries migration at the level of national economies (employment, food security, etc), there are only limited statistical data available on the phenomenon, both in host countries and in the countries of origin. Barely a handful of countries have figures that allow for an assessment of the magnitude of migration (see Table 1). From these data, it can be noted that in most of the countries, migrants represent the majority of the fishers.

Table 1. Percentage of fishers who are migrants.

Country	Percentage
Benin	55
Cameroon	81
Congo	42
Gabon	80

The reasons why fishers and fish workers decide to migrate are various and relate to environmental, social or economic factors. Fish workers that decide to emigrate do so for a number of reasons; either their difficult current situation pushes them to leave, hoping for a better life elsewhere, or there are factors attracting them to a new place, e.g. the possibility to increase their income or the access to new resources. These two sets of dual factors – “push” and “pull” – are summarized in Table 2.

Integration of migrants

For settling in with the host community, unattached or free migrants count on being able to use existing social network of compatriots who have

Table 2. Reasons for migration.

"Push" factors	"Pull" factors
Avoid social obligations	Cheaper inputs, e.g. gear, nets, fuel
Conflicts	Instrumental reasons, e.g. earn enough money to get married, retire, allow for investments (fishing equipment, housing), etc.
Social pressure: remittances	Better fisheries and fish stock abundance
Reduce consumption at place of origin	Better livelihoods: safety net (internal migrations)
Reduction in fish stock abundance	Better socio-economic facilities/infrastructure
Poverty	Easy social integration (social and cultural networks)
Political instability in countries of origin	
Lack of socio-economic infrastructures	
Lack of alternatives activities to fisheries	
Environmental degradation (draught, salification of agricultural areas, etc.)	

already established themselves in the new country. Contractual migrants are usually isolated from the communities in the host country, often living in camps, and generally returning home at the end of their contract.

In some cases the newly arrived migrant is introduced to the traditional chief or village head against the payment of a symbolic tithe (Ngo Likeng 2006, Ovono Edzang 2006, Atti-Mama 2006). This system of payment would indicate that the open and free access to resources is a relative concept. If the migrant failed to respect the procedure, a conflict could ensue. In one case, it turned out that the tithe was not paid to the traditional chief but collected by a group of more or less permanent foreign migrants. By doing so, they did in fact strip the locals of their traditional authority over the resource and the act not only

jeopardised the relation between migrants and locals but also severely threatened the sustainability of the resource.

Integration of migrants into recipient communities is not always easy. Several authors explain that most native and foreign communities live next to each other but do not work together or collaborate. They do not belong to the same society and hence do not share the same concerns. As a consequence, there are misunderstandings that often lead to conflicts, and marginalisation and exclusion of immigrants. The overt or latent conflicts involving migrants are often associated with shared exploitation strategies. Conflicts do generally not occur when immigrants and natives use different gear (Atti-Mama 2006). On the other hand, conflicts can be aggravated if there is competition for access to the same resources. Generally, native fishers tend to claim that foreigners use destructive fishing practices and they also blame them for depriving local fish processors of their production by giving priority to their foreign wives (Solie 2006).

A lack of confidence in the local government on behalf of immigrants is reported in all the countries studied (Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Mauritania and Senegal). Migrants often feel that they are – rightly or wrongly – harassed by the immigration authorities, the police and the fisheries surveillance administration. Moreover, they feel threatened by initiatives in many countries to develop the coastal area.

Migrant fishers and fish workers contribute to the economic development of their host coun-

tries, by creating additional employment within the sector, by transferring technologies to local fishers and by supplying local markets with fishery products and generating export earnings. While being conscious of their status, suffering from marginalisation and exclusion, they expect recognition on behalf of their host community and the authorities of their new country as well as a certain level of social equity. It is the responsibility of the host government to take the initiative to legitimise the status of immigrants. Other actions that would also be needed in order to achieve cohesion include the improvement of migrants' access to basic social services and their inclusion in decision-making processes. It is thus a question of finding mechanisms for improving the involvement of migrant fishers in the formulation and implementation of fisheries management policies, and in local development and poverty reduction strategies. This can be achieved through the creation of policies that are inclusive and promote participatory resource management.

The SFLP experience

In the countries that participated in SFLP's PP2 on coastal co-management (Congo, Gabon, Guinea and Mauritania), socio-professional associations and consultative groups consisting of both local and foreign migrants were established. Some migrants held posts in the new organisational structures that were put in place. However, continued support from the fisheries administration and those involved in local development would be necessary in order to sustain these initiatives.

Most countries participating in the SFLP exercise have recognised the necessity to legally allow for the participation of small-scale fishers and fish workers in resource management and the need to adapt their national fisheries legislation accordingly. Such revisions of the legal provisions were seen as opportunities to address the integration of migrants and, for example, in Guinea the approach was followed successfully leading to a formal recognition of fishing communities and also implicitly to the involvement of migrants in resource management and local development. To varying degrees, similar developments have been noted in other countries.

Migrant fishing people also benefited from a number of activities initiated by the SFLP, including the strengthening of their capacities and knowledge in areas such as literacy, hygiene and health, environmental management, organisational development, lobbying and negotiation skills. These activities constituted important incentives in the empowerment process.

Lessons learned

Co-management can be sustainable if the political and legal environment is supportive and provides rights for the communities to participate to decision making. Setting up co-management is a long process that requires support from all stakeholders and incentives to sustain the process.

Functional and effective co-management institutions give the framework and the tools for dialogue with authorities and organisations. They can help ensure that fishing communities get ac-

cess to basic social services, and other development action. In this way, the communities' negative perception of management committees that discourage irresponsible fishing practices will be counterbalanced by providing services that will help to improve livelihoods.

All components of the rural communities must have equitable representation in co-management institutions, to take all interests into consideration, and ensure that the measures put in place have a sustainable effect on the lives of the most underprivileged social groupings. However, the most vulnerable people must be given very special attention through a gender and class-sensitive approach.

Appropriate systems for communication between stakeholders must be built to encourage community participation in policy discussions. This builds the confidence of partners, gives transparency, and legitimacy to the decisions taken. A common approach can be reached, as well as acceptance of development measures, social dialogue and the mobilization of resources for the benefit of the communities. Providing information to and raising the awareness of the decision-makers helps ensure that national policies and programmes, such as the prevention of serious diseases (e.g. malaria and HIV/AIDS), poverty reduction policies (PRSP), and decentralisation, take the fishing communities' concerns into account.

Poor fishing communities draw most of their livelihoods from fisheries resources, a fact that may end up compromising the co-management actions. Capacity building (adult literacy, access to

micro-finance, income generating activities) help detach fishing communities from the resource to some extent. The promotion of new sources of income also reduces fishery-dependence, and new opportunities are often enhanced by increasing the capabilities of the poor. Even investments in production equipment are not always detrimental to resource management; it has been observed that when fishing communities are supported by management committees, new fishing gear complies better with the regulations.

Capacity building lays the foundation for poverty and vulnerability reduction in fishing communities. A higher educational level (adult literacy) helps to improve awareness and social

engagement. It also builds self-confidence in and involvement in projects of common interest like the management of fisheries resources. The capacities of government officers and local community groups should also be strengthened, as they too, are learning new ways of working in a multi-stakeholder context.

Migration constitutes an opportunity both for the host country (contribution to local and national economies, and to food security) and for the country of origin (fund transfers from abroad). The establishment of measures for the protection of the specific rights of migrant fishing people can constitute an opportunity for introducing local co-management mechanisms.

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